

# THE CHARACTER DIPLOMA

*an incentive to*

MORAL CONDUCT and GOOD CITIZENSHIP

*in*

# PUBLIC SCHOOL TRAINING

*By*

H. O. RITTENHOUSE

*Commander, U.S. Navy, Retired*

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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## PREFACE

THE belief is here advanced that there is no more serious defect in our national life than the inadequate moral training given to children. This defect, in large measure, the result of sweeping changes in our social and industrial life, is so fundamental in its nature and so far-reaching in its effects, that it can account for much of the wayward and vicious tendency of youth, the grosser criminality of adults, the disorder and violence of industrial groups, and the selfishness, dishonesty and corruption too often manifest in business and political life.

The development of vast city populations with distinct tenement, commercial and factory zones, has operated to deprive parents of opportunity and capacity for the moral supervision of their children. So swift has been the course of these changes and so great are their effects that the Church and the Home upon which we once relied for the moral training of children, have become incompetent to discharge the task. Modern living conditions have undermined the power of these institutions as training agencies and weakened their efforts for good, as they daily are menaced by new and enlarged forces of evil. The function of the Church is to give the word of instruction. It lacks the means to convert its word into the deeds and habits of life and, because of this lack, it is inherently weak as a training force. Moral instruction to achieve its end must always be supplemented by the discipline of deed, and we have hitherto looked to the Home to supply this requirement.

The Public School, whose chief purpose it has been to promote the intellectual development of its pupils, has fared better than its sister institutions in adapting itself to the changing order. It has grown in popular favor and become the recognized chief agency by which the youth of the nation are trained to meet their future obligations and tests. During the progress of the changes referred to there has been a seeming reluctance on the part of public school educators to undertake energetic measures along the lines of direct moral training. A backward glance at the origin of our school system affords some explanation of this attitude. In those earlier days the home life of children was more natural and better safe-guarded than at present. Children were in close contact with their parents, shared with them the industries of farm and shop and the duties of the home, and parents accepted, without question, entire responsibility for their moral up-bringing. The schools were called into being as adjuncts of the Home, for the distinct purpose of giving the elements of learning and developing the intellectual faculties. Thus the maintenance of good order and moral conditions in the schools was usually merely incidental to the scholarship activities, while responsibility for moral results still remained with the Home.

This view of the respective functions of the Home and the School, although frequently challenged, has prevailed in school practice to the present time, and along with it has developed a belief among some educators that moral training is a mysterious, obscure and difficult matter to administer and that to undertake it would require unjustifiable sacrifice of time taken from the scholarship subjects.

The conditions to which we are thus brought are neither the calculated nor miscalculated results of human design and purpose. They are rather the unpremeditated product of a civilization with whose onrush we cannot always keep pace. As matters stand today, the moral training of our youth, universally recognized as the basic condition of individual and social welfare, is ineffective and without adequate sponsor. Although the public has come to look more and more to the schools for the entire educational outcome, these institutions have not as yet fully accepted the measure of responsibility for moral training that has passed from the Home and that is but weakly borne by the Church. The influence and prestige enjoyed by our schools today, in all that relates to the welfare of the young, point unmistakably to them as the logical instrumentality for the serious duty under consideration. There is no other available competent agency. Should they decline this grave duty, moral failure is certain to ensue with speedy and fatal consequence.

In the ensuing chapters it is the aim to outline briefly some principles and methods that have application to the broad field of training in general and to show their easy and natural application to the moral field under discussion. The imperative need of moral training and the duty of the Public Schools to impart it, are emphasized, followed by more detail of methods and suggestions relative to its successful treatment. While these measures and plans are by no means new, they are unfamiliar to the public at large and, even where known to professional educators, much misunderstanding often exists as to the reasons, motives and purposes that underlie them. They are logical in concept, experience has proved their efficacy, and they are in successful operation, not only in a number of educational institutions of high standing, but in the difficult field of military life and service where their application is the basic condition of social harmony and high technical efficiency.

The outstanding feature of the proposed methods is the establishment of incentive that leads the pupil to make high endeavor toward the fulfillment of school duties and obligations. The comprehensive activities of school life constitute a real drill field of conduct, and the attitude and effort of the pupil regarding his duties in this field, as shown by the record, are the most important features of his training. They supply a far more significant and substantial basis for public esteem and school commendation than does mere success in scholarship.

Worthy conduct of a pupil is manifested by his effort to accomplish scholarship tasks, by willing compliance with the routine requirements of the school

and by the practice of the familiar fundamental moral precepts and conventions of social life. It is clear that the realization of such conduct is highly favorable to scholarship progress and thereby the attainment of higher grades in school subjects may be confidently expected. Self-effort of the pupil in the development of habitual good conduct minimizes the so-called "problem of discipline," and becomes a positive uplifting force directly contributory to the moral training we seek to administer.

The necessary and sufficient incentive to these ends is the *Character Diploma*, to be conferred as the supreme reward of faithful and worthy school life. Such incentive is associated more nearly with moral than with intellectual motive, and its powerful and beneficent educational force would quickly be felt by parents and the public. Sympathetic response would ensue in their earnest coöperation and in a more intelligent understanding of the true purpose of the schools.

The proposals and suggestions herein made require no additional preparation on the part of teachers, no significant assignment of time, no additional expense and no change in existing courses of study.

Certain defects in the policies and methods of our schools that bear adversely upon good training are noted in Chapters X and XI.

Brief discussion of Military and Religious Training in Chapter XII indicates the basic value of moral training and its contributory support to all special branches of training. The supreme value ascribed to moral character in group life is thus confirmed; and the necessity of developing such character through the activities of the School is an obvious corollary.

Brooklyn, N. Y., June, 1922.



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## CHAPTER I.

### TRAINING IN GENERAL.

THE word *training*, as applied to children and youth, is well understood as designating the act or process by which we endeavor to impart to them ability, skill or mastery along chosen lines of conduct or accomplishment. There are other words, however, in common use, of equal clarity that signify the same thing. Among these are the words *education* and *discipline*. In their liberal meaning the words *training*, *education* and *discipline* are synonymous in their application to the task of developing the young along physical, mental or moral lines. Thus, if our aim is to bestow knowledge and command of English, we may speak of the matter as *education* in English, *discipline* in English, or *training* in English. In a similar manner these words may be applied to other items relative to the bringing up of children. If, in what follows, the word *training* appears oftener than either of the others, it should be attributed to unpremeditated tendency and not to any preference derived from its meaning. The broad meaning of the word *education* has become obscured by the tendency to limit it to the instruction and knowledge derived from the scholarship courses in school and college, and the word *discipline* has suffered in a similar way by its restricted application to the corrective measures and penalties attached to wrong conduct and delinquencies.

The processes of all effective training involve a combination of *knowing* and *doing*, designated in practice as *instruction* and *drill*. Of these two elements drill is the formative, effective factor. "We learn by doing," is a maxim that stands rooted in eternal truth. Instruction merely points the way, but drill carries us to the goal. Knowledge of any kind that has not passed beyond the mental domain may have potentiality, but its effective power awaits manifestation. Not only does practice promote facility, but it reacts directly upon the mind, stimulating its processes, revealing limitations, and giving clear definition to whatever was vague and uncertain.

While instruction should naturally precede drill and is often indispensable, yet success in all kinds of training is vastly more dependent upon what the subject does that upon what he knows. In the training of animals, we attain useful and wonderful results by the mere repetition of acts unattended by any intelligent knowledge on their part of the meaning of our words. In infancy and early childhood we learn many difficult and necessary processes of life almost wholly from simple imitation and repetition. To balance the body, to walk, talk, use various implements, etc., are acquirements gained with but little aid from the spoken word of parent or instructor. The same truth is recognized in our scholarship subjects where competency depends far less upon the knowledge of rules and processes than upon repeated effort and drill that lead to improvement, confidence and mastery. It is the drill that clarifies

and fixes knowledge in the mind of the pupil. Reliable, serviceable knowledge of the rules of grammar and composition is attained only by practical exercises in these subjects. The same is true of all the processes of mathematics. What progress would be made in the teaching of these subjects if, after abundant instruction in their principles, rules and conventions, we required no drill but merely recommended and urged their practice? Illustrations can be found in the laboratory, the workshop, athletic fields and, in fact, from any department of life. Neither the artisan nor the professional man can claim competency until thought, vision and ideas have found expression in the deed that gives them substance. Who would trust himself to the hands of one whose complete knowledge of surgery acquired from books, lectures and observation is unquestioned, but who has never performed an operation?

"Every one that heareth my words and doeth them," says the Greatest of Teachers, "is like a man who laid a foundation upon the rock." The entire lesson of the parable turns upon the difference between *doing* and *not doing*. Words of truth that are not made vital by deed are of passing value only.

Another feature of good training is the matter of *incentive* so largely contributory to success. Where the subject himself perceives clearly the advantages, satisfactions or pleasures that are the direct end of his efforts, we have natural incentives that often are sufficient to accomplish the desired result. Willing effort is exerted; correction, instruction and advice are welcomed and progress is rapid.

Where the benefits of the desired training are not clearly perceived or appreciated, but are remote and unattractive to the learner, effort is stimulated by some intermediate incentive that makes the desired appeal. Such auxiliary incentives, or rewards, are familiar to us in the form of parental approbation, public honors, official testimonials, special privileges and the like. In the usual training of children, both in the home and the school, such intermediate incentive through reward is usually necessary and is in common use. It is impossible for the lisping child to appreciate knowledge of the alphabet, and for the young scholar to know the value of arithmetical tables and processes. Few pupils, indeed, who enter high school take up their Latin or Algebra from inherent love of the subject or from keen realization of its ultimate benefits. The entire school course is taken by the majority of children simply as a part of life's necessary routine until, in the later years of adolescence, they may discover more significant motives. They are encouraged to effort by the commendation of parents, teachers and friends, by pride of successful competition, by special prizes, by public promotion from grade to grade, and by diplomas whose value is attested by the applause and congratulation of the community.

Still another element of training is to be noted whose omission would very often entail failure. This is the interested *Supervision* of the teacher. Faults should be indicated, corrective suggestion and instruction supplied,



and encouragement given. Without this supervision it is manifest that faults would develop unperceived, and their repetition soon lead to detrimental habits difficult to overcome. In order that both teacher and pupil may have good basis for estimating progress, means are often devised for measuring or, at least, comparing results. The periodical tests and the various marking systems, familiar to us as school methods, are examples of the principle of supervision. Imperfect as these marks admittedly are as absolute measures of proficiency, their usefulness is well recognized. The practice of such supervision is also convincing evidence to the learner of the value ascribed by his elders to the subject in hand. Without such evidence incentive would be weakened and effort would languish.

These four salient features of good training methods,—*Instruction*, *Drill*, *Incentive*, and *Supervision*,—are of wide application in the general field of education. While the value of each is fully recognized, preëminent, as an effective factor, is the item of *drill*.

Group training under systematic, approved methods has the advantage of interest, mass psychology and the stimulus of competition to produce results in the aggregate beyond the reach of individual effort by parents or special tutors.

The error is sometimes made of believing that interest and appreciation must be induced in the mind of the pupil before there can be progress and benefit from his drill. Such belief is disproved by experience. It often happens that taste, appreciation and interest develop as a result of proficiency and skill acquired from practice that was at first distasteful and rendered reluctantly. Incidents of this nature are met with in Music and in such scholarship subjects as Algebra, Latin and Geometry. Body and mind react freely upon each other and development may originate from either proficiency or interest. Habits of action acquired through drill mould mental attitudes and influence the emotions. When interest and proficiency actively incite each other, progress is most rapid.

## CHAPTER II.

### MORAL TRAINING

TO mould our youth into conformity with the highest ideals of right living, to engender in children love and appreciation of the time-honored virtues, to make these virtues manifest in their habitual conduct and thereby to fortify our citizenship with goodness and justice, may be accepted in a broad way as indicating the most serious duty that devolves upon parents and teachers.

Various descriptive terms, such as *moral training*, *character education*, etc., are in current use to designate the process of fulfilling this duty. In the previous chapter we have noted the equivalent meanings of the words *training*, *education* and *discipline* as applied to the task of bringing up children. It may now be further said that we find practical equivalence of meanings in such words as *moral*, *conduct*, *character*, *citizenship*, etc., when used adjectively to denote the kind of training or education that may be under consideration. It is submitted that almost any combination of these terms, such as *moral training*, *character training*, *character education* or *moral discipline*, satisfactorily expresses the nature of the duty to be performed. Whatever our choice in the association of these terms, deeply characteristic of our aim in each case is the development in the individual of what we understand by the word *goodness*. In *citizenship* training, for example, we seek to develop good citizens. Good citizens are, first of all, good men and women. However high we may rate knowledge of civics and of the detailed methods of political government, the individual possessing it is no asset to the State if the qualities that constitute goodness are lacking. The good conduct we seek to develop in *conduct* training is none other than the habitual modes of life of a good man. In *character* education the good character we would cultivate is discerned and recognized by the moral standards set by good men and women. Thus these terms embody complete harmony of purpose. The development of good men and women, who habitually do what is right, is their common aim, and such development is the definite purpose embodied in and conveyed by the familiar term *moral training*. The fact is that the duty itself that confronts us is so obvious and so urgent that refinement in the choice of terms to designate it is inconsequential. Controversy over these words turns upon phrasing rather than substance and is suggestive of pedantry.

It is to the more fundamental sections of the mind that the aim of moral training is directed. The field of cultivation underlies the intellectual domain and our task is largely the direction and control of primary forces, motives and emotions. These elements are the unseen springs of human conduct and their sound condition and normal functioning are the chief requisites of good character. Good conduct, the expression of good character, is recognized by

its habitual exemplification of time-tested standards that display preëminently such basic virtues as truthfulness, loyalty, obedience, self-control, honor to parents, courage, patience, endurance, etc.

There has been much confusion and uncertainty in the minds of educators regarding moral training itself and the ways by which it may be effectively administered. Many teachers hold that moral character can be conferred only by indirect means, such as the influence of good example or the moral element inseparable from the good teaching of the usual scholarship subjects, etc. Others find the solution in a code of ethics to be learned as a book lesson or memorized; after which it is hoped that the appeal will have been so convincing that the learner will make it the guide of his life. Some absolve themselves of all responsibility by declaring it to be a duty that concerns parents only. A few uphold the fatalistic theory that some children "catch it," as they do the measles, while others unfortunately escape it. Many methods for direct character training, having elements of merit, have been tried, but none has gained wide favor or been generally adopted. We will endeavor to show that much of the difficulty and mystery that becloud the matter may be removed by a consideration of the close relationship between conduct and character.

Conduct and character act and react upon each other in conformity with the well known interactions of body and mind, of which they are respectively phases and modes. They are as closely unified as are the totalities of body and mind in our human makeup. We may regard character as a state of mind, and conduct as the bodily response to this state. Or, we may conceive of conduct as a course of action, and character as the ensuing impress upon the mind. They are thus reciprocal consequents. Every act makes its mental impress. All psychologists teach that repeated acts or habits deepen the mental patterns and fix character. No less true is it that the impulses of fixed character yield uniformity of conduct.

Character training is, essentially, a matter inseparable from conduct. Good habits are, at once, the construction material of character and the evidence of character already acquired. Willing compliance with regulations established for no other purpose than the common good soon begets the habit of asking the questions relative to any contemplated action, "Is it right or wrong?" "To do or not to do?" "Shall I or shall I not?" A mind sensitive to these promptings is embryonic moral character, and every right decision is an advance step in moral training.

Such close relationship of conduct and character shows that in moral training we may logically apply direct effort to the establishment of good habits, assured that in so doing we are moulding character; or, we may impart recognized moral precepts and good suggestion to the mind, knowing that, when practiced, good conduct will result. Both methods have value; they conflict in no way with each other and may be used in combination.



It is then reasonable and natural to ask if these two methods are equally effective in practice. Brief consideration will clearly indicate that the first method, that in which effort is applied directly to conduct, is decidedly superior to the other. In reaching this conclusion we observe that the body and its phases of conduct are openly subject to sense perception. The evidence of our eyes and ears is usually trustworthy. We thus know when the pupil follows an indicated line of conduct and when he fails to follow it. In each case we know the nature of the mental impress that is made; and when he is encouraged to self-control and led willingly into good conduct we know that good habits are forming and good character is developing. On the other hand, mind and character are beyond the reach of our senses. We may confer knowledge, commend precepts, and by both direct and indirect suggestion endeavor to implant good character by effort made directly upon the mind; but we have no immediate knowledge of the impress made. Our seed is sown in the dark and often at random. We cannot see the mental reactions and we are uncertain of the result. Moreover, there is often a considerable interval of time between the instruction thus given and the opportunity to apply it, and during such interval the impress fades.

When attention is given primarily to conduct, the pupil is kept alert and sensitive to the concepts of right and wrong. The word of advice or the corrective action can be applied at the very time his conduct shows the need. It is the *doing* that makes instruction effective, and instruction, or other mental stimulus, that is not discharged by deed is of little benefit.

No doubt a carefully adjusted combination of the two methods would give the best result. Entirely apart, however, from the preceding considerations, but fully confirming them, we have the testimony of long experience in all kinds of training, corroborated by abundant current practice, that an ounce of drill is worth a pound of instruction.

Thus it is the element of drill, or doing, under wise and sympathetic supervision, that is all-important. Children of school age, as a rule, need but little instruction in the commonplace elementary matters of right and wrong. Some knowledge, at least, of these things is imparted by the home and through juvenile association. The knowledge of right conduct, as distinguished from wrong, extant today in persons ten years of age and over, *if put in operation*, would pacify the world over night. Children of this age and upward, whether in the home, on the street, or in school are, in general, conscious of their improper conduct in damaging property, in disrespect to parents and elders, in disobedience to recognized authority, in the violation of school regulations, and the like. It is not the word of knowledge that is lacking, but the self-contained power to transmute the word into deed. To cultivate this power until moral response is habitual is the real task in moral training.

It is a prevalent error and one that often blocks progress to believe that the mind must first be made moral by books, precepts, codes, etc., before good

results can be obtained. The really moral mind is not to be expected in children. It is of slow growth and ripens only with years. Actual self-decisions, self-control, consciousness of progress and the encouragement and esteem of parents and teachers will lead the pupil to appreciation of good conduct. At this stage success is within reach and we may reasonably look forward to the development of real interest and spiritual desire.

It will be noted that in effective moral training we recognize and adopt the principles applicable to training in general. The items of instruction, drill, incentive and supervision present no more difficulty in their application to conduct training than to other kinds of training. Moral training is a natural function of the home. Parents as a rule are even better qualified to train their children to be good and to do right than they are to train them in scholarship subjects or specialties of any kind. We speak in praise of the good home training characteristic of early American life and no tradition of mystery or intricacy attaches to its methods. No doubt sometimes it was rigid and severe, and much of it could have been improved. But when we reflect that it was administered in individual homes by parents without special preparation for the task, and without systematic co-operative effort, we cannot fail to note that moral training is a very practical matter, free from obscurity. It has taken centuries of study and experiment to develop the processes of intellectual training from their humble, scattered application, to their present high efficiency manifest in the comprehensive group education of our schools and colleges. This progress is the result of perfected organization, refined system and improved methods. Who can doubt the benefit to the nation if these highly equipped educational agencies should apply commensurate effort along the lines of moral training?

## CHAPTER III.

### SERIOUS NEED OF MORAL TRAINING AND THE DUTY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO ADMINISTER IT.

ALL human wisdom and experience unite in recognition of moral character as the basic factor in the development of stable civilization and in the realization of peace among men. If there is any item or factor of greater import than this in its beneficent effects upon social life, it yet awaits discovery and acceptance. The time-honored fundamental virtues, extolled by the ancients, still mark the pathways of life that offer the greatest measure of safety, happiness and peace. This truth, so often urged upon the individual youth for his guidance, has equal application to all social groups in their desire for collective well-being.

Good faith among men is essentially antecedent to reliance upon human covenants. Unless constitutions, laws, agreements and treaties are underwritten by character that justifies confidence, they are indeed but "scraps of paper." Good government cannot guarantee to make good men, but good men are indispensable to the creation and maintenance of good government. Good citizenship means a national body of men and women who desire to live under law and order, who are willingly obedient to the laws of their country, and whose conduct in all human relationships is characterized by the basic intent to do right and avoid wrong.

"Right" and "wrong" are such homely and familiar words that their serious import is often overlooked. We sometimes prefer more stately terms and by easy transition are led to such words as honesty, truthfulness, justice, obedience, self-control, etc. In these we recognize the unquestioned virtues. Yet it is doubtful if these accredited terms make the way of life any clearer than such simple words as "love your neighbor as yourself," "Obey the law," "do right" and "be good." But, however expressed, such are the attributes and conduct indispensable as the basis of satisfactory social life.

Recognition and acceptance of the foregoing truths entail the obvious duty upon parents and teachers of making moral character the main objective in bringing up children and youth. Neither material nor intellectual attainment, to whatever degree achieved, can compensate for the lack of moral foundations. That moral training should have precedence in interest and effort over all else in the rearing of children is recognized by educators in the oft-repeated declaration that character is the supreme aim of education.

But notwithstanding our clear knowledge of the vital issues dependent upon the performance of this duty, brief reflection will convict us of unpardonable neglect. Divided responsibility, shared in the past by Home, School and Church, accounts in large measure for this unfortunate fact. These important institutions engaged with their special tasks and functions have

drifted along independent lines of effort and suffered the great moral fundamentals to languish and decline.

The Home, as a constructive moral force, has almost vanished in congested city populations. Multitudes of boys and girls of the tenement districts are deprived of any home discipline worthy of the name. They find the street more attractive than their dull quarters, and their interests germinate and develop thereon. They cannot avoid evil associations if they would, and they fall into immediate contact with vice in all its forms and in all degrees of grossness. The father's work takes him daily from parental supervision, while household duties, beset with difficulty, often discourage and overwhelm the mother in her single-handed struggle. If there is any moral result whatever to be credited to the Home in relation to this group of city children and youth, it is wholly obliterated and negated by the disastrous environment.

Even in the more favored home life of the nation, parents are lax in applying direct and effective moral training to their children. Many are incompetent and many others are ignorant of its importance. Belief is widely prevalent that our schools are adequately caring for the matter and that the home is relieved of responsibility. Thus moral training by the home has disappeared and become practically impossible in large sections of our cities, and elsewhere it is weak and utterly disproportionate to the great national need.

The moulding power of the Church over the moral life of children has never been strong. This is largely due to the fact that in organization and methods churches are ill-adapted to the essential processes of training. Moral training, as we have seen, like all other kinds of training, demands the "doing" of the word to establish any claim for efficiency. The Church may give *instruction* but, without *drill*, the result is comparable to that of the house built upon sand. Enrollment in Sunday Schools embraces but a small percentage of children, and attendance is low. Entertainment constitutes a considerable element of their activities and but little instruction can be given in weekly sessions of twenty to thirty minutes only. Disciplinary influence to control the conduct of the pupil between sessions is wanting and too often his conduct during the session is a liability instead of an asset to the cause. Thus serious Sunday school methods and effort have but restricted application and are concerned almost wholly with conferring words of truth and advice, while opportunity for converting word into deed is lacking. It is this inherent defect that renders the contribution of the Church to the moral training of the young unimpressive and much of its effort unproductive.

In the development of public education moral training has not been accorded the attention and consideration its importance demands. It has been held as a matter incidental and subordinate to scholarship, and movements to establish it as the dominant motive of training have not met enthusiastic



response from public school educators. Their attitude is largely accounted for by the conditions and circumstances under which, in earlier years, our ancestors began to establish town and neighborhood schools. At that time children, for the most part, were brought up and trained in the Home. Parents felt themselves responsible for the outcome. Children helped in the work of farm, shop and store, and were almost constantly under parental supervision. The leaders among these men and women had strong religious convictions, knew the supreme value of moral character in human life, and endeavored to bring up their children in accordance with this knowledge. Realizing, however, the importance of intellectual training, the schools were established as auxiliary to the homes to give the elements of learning. There was no intention that these primitive institutions should take over the entire responsibility of training; and far less was there any thought that the scholarship training of the schools would relieve parents from caring for the moral welfare of their children. Character was held as fundamental; scholarship as a desirable but secondary acquirement. Home, Church and School, each had its part in the education of the child, and under these conditions it was right and natural that the schools should concentrate effort upon scholarship, the leading purpose for which they were instituted.

Many changes in industrial and social life have since taken place that deeply affect the activities and responsibilities of all the agencies of progress. While the history of these transformed conditions is of little moment to us, the conditions themselves, as they now exist, are the serious matter with which we have to deal.

Conspicuous among these changes is the ever-increasing tendency to depart from the individual family life of our earlier history and to gather in urban masses where family independence and individuality are dimmed by growing interest with larger industrial, economic and social units. Congested human life with its more vital problems and keener interests demands organization along lines so comprehensive that the significance of the family is minimized and weakened. Our work, our travel and our recreations are in groups and throngs where parental direction has become displaced by other agencies. Thus the welfare of the individual and the family alike has become dependent upon the stability and coöperation of these larger elements which, of necessity, become the subjects of our plans and processes. Our children share in these conditions. They are educated in school groups, they play in block and section groups, and too often their rowdyism and criminal activities are inspired by gang associations. If their good character is to be developed it can no longer be efficiently done by the weakened hands of individual homes, but must be provided for in the larger group life to which they gravitate.

Another change we may note is the wonderful development of the public school system from its humble beginning to its present established primacy over every other agency that undertakes direct purposive effort to

prepare our children for the grave duties of citizenship and social life. Responsibility that once rested on the Home and Church for this task has been allowed to lapse or has been absorbed by the schools, and the public has come to regard the responsibility of these institutions as all-comprehensive and their programs as all-sufficient. But notwithstanding the new order produced by these changes, the schools would still hold the Home responsible for moral training as in the earlier days.

Another reason why the claims of moral training are not more cordially embraced by our public schools is their close affiliation with the private colleges whose chief purpose avowedly is to confer the benefits of higher education along intellectual and scientific lines to the comparatively few who are qualified to receive them. This partnership of interests operates to defeat the training in moral character so vitally needed by the multitudes of our youth who do not go to college, and upon whose good citizenship national peace and security so largely rest. The proverbial difficulty of trying to serve two masters seems here to have resulted in a choice that subordinates public interest to narrower and less worthy ends. Our schools put forth strenuous primary effort to reach predetermined scholarship standards. This they accept as their special task in the educational field and they measure success by the results achieved in this endeavor. Results in moral training are of secondary consideration and go unmeasured.

Thus, while moral training has passed in large extent from the hands of Home and Church, it is still denied rightful place in school administration. Scholarship engages the dominant thought and effort of supervisors and teachers. We are now bringing up our children under a complete reversal of educational values in careless disregard of all wise counsel and experience. Enticed by the dazzling allurements of scholarship, we have joined with European nations in fierce competition for intellectual wealth, the acquirement of which, without moral foundation, is no less disappointing and perilous than similar possession of material riches.

The unfortunate fact is thus revealed that the duty of training our children to meet the high demands of character and service that await them as future citizens, remains unperformed. The conclusion seems unavoidable that moral foundations have lost their revered and exalted place in public esteem, or, we are forced to the confession of gross neglect of our sacred obligations as parents and citizens.

Under existing conditions, the public schools have become the logical and sole agency for the effective moral training of our youth. The supreme purpose of these institutions is to insure the welfare and perpetuity of the State. They are not established for the selfish benefits that individual pupils may harvest from them. They are well organized and equipped, the competency of supervisors and teachers is unquestioned, and school attendance requirements bring all children within their control.

Notwithstanding the unfavorable conditions for moral training in the homes, wrought by our highly organized industrial life, some educators would still impose the entire responsibility for such training upon parents. In meeting this attitude, we may freely admit that responsibility for all training that children need, of whatsoever nature, rests *ultimately* with parents. But in the training of children, as in other matters, efficiency is enhanced by division and specialization of tasks. The intellectual training now conferred by our schools is an outstanding illustration. Who can picture its weakness if this duty were left to individual homes? Yet, in committing this duty to the public schools, parents do not, and morally cannot, abandon their individual and associative responsibility for the outcome. Such responsibility is fully recognized when the parent, in conjunction with other citizens, helps to establish the school. It is likewise recognized in the coöperation given by the Home, by Parent Teachers' Associations, and in the establishment of Boards of Education representative of the general citizenship, directly responsible for the basic features of the work.

If at any time the parent-citizen, for reasons of convenience or efficiency, seems to relinquish personal responsibility for the training of children, and to transfer it to other hands, it is clear that he does this in no absolute sense, but that he merely exchanges a direct responsibility for the indirect one involved in the choice of some intermediate agency.

Under the broad duties exercised by representatives of the Home, the experts of the school system have the specific duty of carrying on the actual work of instruction. For the faithful performance of this duty they are directly responsible to the homes they serve. Such duty in behalf of parents, involving vital issues affecting the individual and the State, becomes charged with a moral quality of deeper significance than that entering into ordinary covenants. The true, conscientious teacher shares the parent's solicitude for the child and recognizes fiduciary obligations more compelling than those written into statutory law. Who can question the higher efficiency and who will deny the greater benefits to the State if similar duty in behalf of parents, relative to moral training, were definitely assigned to the schools?

The public school system has mastered difficult and intricate problems of organization; adapted its instruction to meet the needs of a complex civilization; and its efficiency in the performance of its accepted tasks is unquestioned. It has thus gained the confidence of the people as the civic institution above all others upon which to base the safety and happiness of our people. But conditions of desirable social life are inseparable from the practice of the moral virtues as the indispensable rules of conduct in our relations with each other. This undying truth is manifest at every stage of the world's history and has never been more obvious to thoughtful minds than at the present hour.

The commanding prestige enjoyed by our schools is, in fact, a menace if we so mistake values as to lose the substance in grasping at the shadow. While



we are magnifying our schools and trusting to results that appeal to eye and ear, regardless of adequate provision for the development of moral character, we witness today on every hand appalling evidence of our neglect in the manifold forms of juvenile vice and crime.

Exactly as we now assign definite responsibility to the schools for the intellectual training of our children, so we should assign to them like responsibility for their moral training. In this, as in all matters affecting the welfare of our youth, Home and School will coöperate to the fullness of their opportunity. The methods hereinafter proposed by which the schools can assume leadership and make substantial contribution to national character and uplift, require no additional demands of time or money, nor do they involve any significant change in programs of study.

## CHAPTER IV.

### BASIC RELATION OF MORAL TRAINING TO ALL EDUCATIONAL AIMS. EFFORT AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF CONDUCT. INCENTIVE AND SUPERVISION.

**A**DVOCACY of moral training as vital to the well being of both the individual and the group is usually based upon the results of human experience and the teachings of history. The testimony from these sources is so clear that the direct relationship between morality and human welfare is undisputed. In the preceding chapter such relationship of cause and effect was assumed without attempt to note the direct benefits of moral conduct upon the immediate activities through which our lives find expression. We will now consider good conduct, the practice of moral character, not only as justified by its ultimate results, but as conferring its benefits upon the particular efforts in which we engage; and thereby discern its basic, beneficent relationship to the various fields of training.

Conduct is not a detached or separable department of life whose interests and development we can turn to or from at our pleasure. Our every act, all that we do, is our conduct, and we cannot escape it as an ever-present fact, if we would. It thus follows that the conduct of children is to be discerned, trained and judged in the continuity of all their activities that come under our observation. The chief activity of pupils in school is the performance of school tasks. Their conduct relative to these is a most important section of the field to which moral training is applied. This is true whatever the nature of the task or special training may be. In agricultural training, manual training, scholarship training or business training, for examples, the individual pupil makes more or less progress according to his conduct, as shown by his attitude, application and effort relative to the subject. In group training of any kind the group, as a whole, will benefit by the good order and contagious spirit of endeavor that comes from good social conduct. Thus in school training, of whatever special kind, the more effectively we apply the methods of moral training, the better our results not only in the domain of character but also in the specific purposes of the school.

Good conduct is so closely identified with our best interests in all that we do that there is no possible conflict between good moral training and any kind of special training, even when in operation together. Nor does the administration of the moral training curtail or displace in any degree the special training. This is because of the basic relationship that moral training bears to all educational effort.

Clear recognition of this relationship will serve to correct the too prevalent belief that all school time and effort directed to moral training must necessarily be drawn from the scholarship assignment and diminish its product. Such

objection would undoubtedly apply with full force as among the many kinds of special training that have little or no relation to each other. The time and effort given to agriculture, for example, are wholly lost to grammar, arithmetic and shopwork. No one of these subjects contributes directly to another. But this is not true of conduct training, which can be applied in harmonious coöperation with all of them to their advantage.

It is also manifest that as between conduct training and the special training with which it may be associated, the former is basic and more influential. Successful effort applied to good conduct is of direct benefit to the special subject; but the special subject may be taught with a measure of success without any benefit to conduct or character. The relationship of the whole to its parts is here suggested. Furthermore, it is undeniable that, without the basis of good conduct, teaching of the special subject will fall short of high achievement.

The basic importance of character in all group life is clearly illustrated in military service, where it is recognized by the best authorities as indispensable in the training of both officers and men. To make a good soldier the first and chief endeavor is to make a good man. Good conduct is encouraged by incentives in the nature of privileges and rewards and on this foundation the highest technical and professional efficiency is reached. Experience bars every other way by failure. Primary effort given directly to technical drills, with only incidental and forced attention to conduct, leads inevitably to weakness and demoralization.

The most important phase of conduct relative to scholarship tasks is the effort manifested by the pupil to master them. This effort may be judged in school by his application to study during study periods, by his attention and demeanor during recitations, by the degree of promptitude and state of completeness shown by his homework assignments and, at least partially, by the character of his recitations. If satisfactory effort is thus manifest, his conduct is clear, regardless of his progress. If such effort is not manifest, his conduct is at fault; and the fault is a far more serious one than the scholarship failure it may entail. Such fault should never go unrecorded. Even in the case of a bright pupil, a satisfactory recitation is no cover whatever for neglect of duty and waste of time. These are serious character defects that moral training should remedy.

Quite apart from his conduct relative to scholarship tasks is the pupil's conduct in the broader field of school life and association wherein his habits of compliance or non-compliance with well-known rules and social requirements furnish large opportunity for observation and action.

It will, therefore, be understood that the word "Conduct," as herein used, has comprehensive scope far beyond any restricted application to such matters as etiquette, formal manners and personal bearing. When administrative attention is primarily directed to conduct training, it embraces a broad field of action in which all special kinds of training, such as scholarship, manual

skill, etc., are but included parts. By uplifting the moral plane we uplift all that rests upon it. And what is there, we may ask, in human life and interest that does not so rest? It is this basic relationship of character to all our social engagements and duties that makes it the chief aim of education.

The processes of direct moral training in public schools are incomplete. There is sufficient instruction, and the items of drill, found in the real life and responsibilities of the pupil, are abundant. Incentive, however, is almost wholly lacking, while the processes of supervision are defective in measures that impress the pupil with the necessity of avoiding and correcting conduct faults.

Such powerful incentives as are now so freely contributed to the scholarship courses are almost unknown in the field of moral training where the need is plain and imperative. This basic field is the strategic point for the application of all the forces we can bring to bear in the cause of education. Scholarship itself will benefit by any incentives that promote good conduct.

In the practice of supervision, character faults are too often ignored because of the seeming insignificance of the deeds that embody them, or because of the trouble incident to their proper treatment. When cognizance is taken of faults the disciplinary measures usually make but transient impress upon the pupil. Neither appeal nor reproof can escape the weakness of mere words addressed to minds often unreceptive; and punitive action of any kind, and however necessary, has no constructive influence upon character. Penalties become but the price paid by the pupil to clear his record and enjoy official good standing with his associates.

## CHAPTER V.

### PRACTICAL CONDUCT TRAINING; OUTLINE OF METHODS. DISCUSSION.

TO make moral training supreme in fact, self-effort on the part of the pupil must be induced. We should therefore give our highest rewards for the exemplification of good conduct, high endeavor, and willing compliance with the conventions and rules of social school life. Success of a pupil from term to term should be recognized, first of all, on the basis of these attainments. The recognitions that have value above all others in the minds of pupils are grade promotions and graduation diplomas. These, then, should be expressive of satisfactory progress in the development of moral character, the highest school aim, and the indispensable equipment for satisfactory social life.

The graduation diploma should be a certificate of character with pointed reference to good citizenship. Character commendation, phrased in impressive language, should be the dominant feature of the testimonial. A separate certificate of scholarship results, giving necessary information should accompany the diploma as a subordinate document. The diploma should be denied to every pupil whose conduct falls below the designated standard, regardless of scholarship.

The moral atmosphere and orderly conditions of school life will be benefited by this procedure and scholarship results improved. All that can be expected of any pupil in his scholarship tasks is earnest effort, whatever the result. To make such effort is a high moral obligation. If he is unwilling and indolent, the character fault, not the resulting scholarship failure, is the serious matter that forfeits the reward.

Such measures would have far-reaching beneficent results entirely apart from the direct purpose of individual reward. Teachers, parents and the public at large, even more than pupils, would be awakened to deeper sense of the value of moral character in life, and this in turn would contribute new support to the school by more effective home coöperation and increased public interest. By such means the supreme claims of character over every other school purpose would receive practical recognition and become established in the national mind.

The usual method of dealing with faults of conduct needs adjustment to bring them under measurement and relate them definitely to the pupil's progress and ultimately to his title to the school diploma. In current practice incidents of misconduct, delinquencies, etc., are treated as "disciplinary" matters. When they are of a minor nature, teachers usually have limited discretion to take appropriate action, subject, however, to review and approval by the principal. More serious conduct faults go directly to the principal, or to the designated discipline officer, usually by written report. The principal is primarily responsible for the discipline of the school. Disciplinary action



may take the form of words or of compulsory deed, and the range of such action is wide. When action in a given case has been fulfilled, the incident is practically closed and the pupil is no further concerned with it. Often no record is made of the action taken, and the written report having served its transient purpose may be discarded or committed to undisturbed slumber in the files.

It is precisely at this point that our present methods are defective and need carrying forward to educational completion. Supervision that merely observes and comments or punishes avails but little. Real training (discipline, in its higher sense) must provide for the self-correction of faults. Motive must be voluntary and from within, not coercive from without. To obtain these conditions, the conduct records must be kept alive and used at the end of the term to ascertain conduct standing by numerical grading, as is done in the scholarship subjects.

The original entries of record are the Reports to Principal usually made on filing cards. Such written entry should be made in the case of every fault or delinquency other than those for which friendly admonition is adequate. Habitual reliance, however, by a teacher upon repeated warnings, is a serious disciplinary weakness to be avoided. After consideration by the discipline official, the gravity of the fault is noted on the card, in accordance with a numerical scale (see chapter VII), together with any other disposition the case may merit. The completed report cards in the case of each pupil constitute his conduct record for the term (or other period), and from them a conduct grade is readily obtained.

The introduction of the character diploma and the enlarged use of conduct records, as above outlined, involve no significant change in the execution of school programs nor in administrative routine. The existing mechanism of operation is well adapted to the end in view. By the character diploma we supply moral motive to the pupil and keep the consciousness of such motive ever-present in the minds of pupils, teachers and parents alike. The enlarged use of the records relates the pupil's conduct directly to his school success and its operation is an office matter easily conducted by clerical assistants.

In justification of these measures and to meet questions that may naturally arise concerning them in the minds of those to whom they are not familiar, comment on some points may be excusable.

It is sometimes urged that our conceptions of right and wrong are generally so unstable, and so uncertain as to absolute truth, that we cannot be too careful in imposing them upon, or even suggesting them to, the minds of children. There are those who apparently believe that the personality of the child is so sacred that his mind regarding what is right and wrong should not be directed or biased by the belief of another. Self-development in these matters is his divine right, not to be impaired in any degree, even when action is accompanied by parental love and interest. It has been openly advocated

that children should not suffer direction or control, except as measures of extreme necessity, and that they should be left to discover for themselves the disciplined pathways of life that it has taken ages to disclose.

It is not believed, however, that sane educational opinion accepts such views. The experiment of self-government by children is revealed in its naked absurdity in the uncontrolled street life of our youth and in its criminal consequences. There are surely wide areas of light revealed by experience where mankind has learned to walk in safety, and dark areas wherein it is fatal to venture. There are fundamentals of conduct of which we can say to our children with undisputed finality that they are right or wrong. If, after centuries of experience this is not true and we are to leave each generation to grope its way without help from the past, then morality is a spiritual wilderness without light, and its discussion is without excuse. The great virtues and moral precepts that constitute the inherited wisdom of the past are the guide posts of life that point us along the pathways of safety. There can be no controversy over their certainty and authority. To reject their guidance is to renounce all morality, for there is no other.

In the field of the accepted fundamental virtues we instruct and lead our children with confidence. Within its familiar domain we understand, without attempting precise definition, that the term wrong conduct, or misconduct, embraces acts that violate widely accepted moral precepts, avoidable acts that work harm to others, and acts that disregard the desires of the social body as expressed through its authorized agency. When wrong conduct is the result of ignorance, we do not impute moral laxity. When it is the result of carelessness, or of feeble resistance to temptation, in the light of knowledge, such laxity is manifest. When wrong conduct is wilful we unhesitatingly declare it immoral and reprehensible.

Failure to provide incentive to self-effort toward good conduct on the part of pupils, has led to the illogical practice of imposing entire responsibility upon teachers for the good conduct of their classes. This is inherently wrong in the case of pupils in the upper grades who cannot be shielded by any pretense of ignorance. When pupils perceive that the teacher is held accountable for their conduct, they naturally feel relieved of all personal responsibility and join with supervisors, parents and the public in imputing their faults and disorder to the teacher's inefficiency. They expect the teacher to persuade, cajole or compel them into good conduct without effort of their own. Character training can make no progress against such error. It is manifest that the good conduct of a class should spring from the moral element in its individuals, and not be dependent upon the devices and ability of a teacher.

Because of this too prevalent practice, teachers come to be classified as "strong" or "weak." It seems to be taken for granted that outside control alone is applicable. That supreme responsibility to cultivate self-control rests with the pupil himself, is overlooked. The "strong" teacher may succeed



and the "weak" teacher may fail; but in neither case is there any real progress toward spontaneous self-control. At this point the school reward based upon the conduct record is adapted to the desired end. It supplies motive and makes clear to the pupil his personal responsibility.

*Instruction* is an element of training that naturally precedes drill. We cannot hold children accountable for their wrong conduct before they are old enough to have the knowledge and consciousness of wrong doing. Knowledge of right and wrong conduct relative to the common matters of life is usually conveyed to children by parents and teachers in the natural associations of home and school. They also absorb much by their own observation and experience. During the earlier years we are patient with their faults. By words of instruction and by judicious restraint, we endeavor to mould their conduct into good habits and to implant in their minds fundamental moral concepts.

The first four years of the elementary school may well be regarded as a period for instruction in the virtues of obedience, truthfulness, honesty, etc. We endeavor at the same time to inculcate and encourage habits of good conduct. While such procedure involves no significant change from current practice in good schools, yet, to attain the best results, there should be uniformity and systematic effort throughout the school. These can be realized only by giving the matter official recognition on the school program. It cannot safely be left to the views, moods and convenience of individual teachers.

Such instruction and guidance by word should be followed as soon as possible by transferring emphasis of training to the responsive conduct of the pupil, holding him responsible for results. Words are but the symbols of thought, and thought, alone, is utterly unstable foundation for character. If it finds no expression in deed, its value soon vanishes. Words of moral advice and persuasion bear much the same relation to the moral character we would develop as the blue-print plans of the architect bear to the edifice he would build. It is not till we get busy with brick and mortar that we begin to realize our dreams.

There comes the time when, by reason of age and the knowledge acquired, the pupil should begin to practice self-decision and self-control in his conduct. This is the beginning of the drill stage proper. We surely are justified in the belief that, with few exceptions, children ten years of age know that it is wrong to violate school regulations devised for the common good, that it is wrong to neglect school tasks, to use profane or obscene language, to wilfully injure public property, to be saucy and disrespectful to elders, and to commit other such well-known faults.

Beginning therefore with the fifth year of school life, and thence onward to the completion of the high school course, training methods should be focused upon the *conduct* of the pupil viewed as moral drill.

The items to be developed by conduct response are found in the life

and routine duties of the school. These duties have no make-believe quality. They are real and are adapted to the pupil's age and capacity. His participation in these activities constitutes his school conduct. The more prominent divisions of this conduct are careful compliance with school rules, faithful and diligent effort to accomplish the prescribed courses and tasks, and the acceptance, in practice, of the familiar moral precepts of social life. Proficiency will be determined by a consideration of the number and character of his faults and errors as shown by the record, precisely as in the scholarship and other departments.

Success is thus conditioned upon the effort and ability of the pupil to fulfill his moral obligations and tasks, to cultivate self-control and make prompt decision in behalf of duty. Failing in these things he has failed in the supreme school purpose. As an essential means to the end in view the conduct records should be carefully made and, keeping faith with ourselves and with our pupils, they should be made the basis of rewards, promotions and final testimonials.

Punishments and penalties, as a rule, are devoid of moral incentive. Even as deterrents they have little value except in special cases when severe or extreme action is demanded. We may not impose severe penalties for minor offences; and mild penalties for such offences are mere barter and sale that do not prevent repetition. Minor faults must not be omitted in compiling the official record. If overlooked they not only lead inevitably to more serious ones, but they develop a contemptuous disregard for authority that finds expression outside the school if not within it. The habit of committing so-called small offences, *with full knowledge of the wrong-doing involved*, is far more deadly to character than the occasional more serious offence committed under the impulse of momentary temptation. It is dangerous to encourage the idea of *degrees* in the matter of obedience.

The graduation reward for good conduct, based on the record, takes adequate care of these minor offences, as well as the more serious ones, and gives the pupil incentive for self-control and improvement. He soon realizes that he, alone, is the responsible author of the record and that success or failure rests with himself.

The supervision of conduct manifest in keeping the records and appraising their worthiness at stated periods, provides additional motive for self-effort, self-reliance and self-control. The pupil thereby is brought to see that to possess good character he must build it. It cannot possibly be conferred upon him by another and the enlistment of his own will is indispensable. He is unlikely to acquire this vision if his teacher is held responsible for his misdeeds.

It should be noted that the foregoing methods by which conduct grades are determined are essentially the same as those by which numerical grades are reached, not only in the scholarship subjects of school and college, but

in the various departments of life where comparative measurements of a similar nature are made.

We have become so familiar with the marking system in educational institutions that we usually make but little question of its accuracy and we attribute a positive character to the results as if we had actually been measuring details of merit. A little reflection will show that the positive result we ultimately reach is, in fact, the residual after we have deducted carefully weighed errors and faults from an assumed perfect standard. It is the number and character of errors and failures in a given performance that determine its comparative worthiness. Language and mathematics papers, for example, are graded by a careful scanning of the errors, noting their number and significance. It is not only the fairest way but, we are tempted to say, the only fair way. It would be quite impossible to agree upon a system that would contemplate the direct measurement of everything that is good and correct in a given examination paper. The details would be almost limitless in number and their relative importance would be the subject of endless controversy.

The same conditions are encountered in the grading relative to other school subjects, in departments of government where merit systems exist, and in practically all contests of skill in athletic and recreational fields. We may go even further and say that in social life when we attempt to form opinion of individual moral character, not in carefully estimated numerical terms, but in the commonplace terms of thought and language, such opinion necessarily turns upon the number and gravity of the immoral and unworthy acts that have come to our notice. In the absence of faults, good character is to be assumed. Even if we should attempt the difficult summation of the good that we have witnessed, justice would yet demand the addition of the good we have not witnessed.

Thus it is seen that the methods advocated relative to the conduct records are in full accord with professional and general practice. The numerical gravity assigned to an offense is not, in any sense nor by any intent, to be viewed as a penalty or punishment. The filed report is simply the record of a fact. The pupil virtually makes his own record, and the numerical weight assigned to a fault after investigation is a mere translation from English phrase to a more convenient form for ultimate comparisons.

## CHAPTER VI.

### INSTRUCTION FOR FIRST FOUR GRADES: DETAILS AND SUGGESTIONS

**I**N order to systematize instruction and make deep impression, it is recommended that no less than one period per week be devoted to the moral *teaching* of pupils during their course in the first four grades. It is urged that this instruction be assigned on the program for one of the regular periods of the week. To assign it as an extra period outside of official instruction hours, or leave it to voluntary, sporadic effort, is to belittle its importance and invite mere time serving ineffective treatment.

The subjects of instruction should be drawn from the well recognized elements of moral conduct, and selected topics should be distributed among the four grades in such manner that emphasis of effort may be applied to them successively as the child passes from grade to grade. As an example of such distribution, the following is offered:

- For Grade I.—Respect and Obedience.
- For Grade II.—Truthfulness and Honesty.
- For Grade III.—Unselfishness and Justice.
- For Grade IV.—Cleanliness and Purity.

It must be distinctly understood that such schedule is not to be interpreted in any narrow sense. We should not defer or wholly exclude consideration of a timely topic merely because it has not been reached in its assigned grade. Practical moral instruction must necessarily take immediate cognizance of faults and misconduct of any kind as they arise in the routine life of the school, and appropriate instruction and correction be administered at the time. The purpose of the schedule is to furnish basis for system and thoroughness; and attempt has been made to arrange the topics in an order suitable to the needs of the pupil as he advances in age.

The method of instruction should be of the most informal nature. There should be no difficult lessons or memorizations assigned for a subsequent session. The teacher should present the topic in a way to gain the interest of the pupils and then, by serious advice, persuasive reasoning and suitable illustration, show the necessity and worthiness of the matter under discussion. The illustrations may be by story from history or from current events; or, the lesson may be developed from the reading of a suitable book story, whether of fiction or of fact. Pertinent questions and discussion should occupy a portion of the time. Although the proceedings are informal, they must be made serious and impressive. Any tendency to treat the topic with levity or indifference would be fatal to the end in view.

It is recommended that these topics be discussed from time to time at parents' meetings and conferences in order to promote home coöperation.



It is suggested that the scheduled topics for each grade be conspicuously displayed in the appropriate classrooms as a constant reminder and a guiding force for the pupils during the school year. These topics should appear on the printed form of Report to Parents, and appropriate comment (excellent, very good, good, unsatisfactory, etc.) should be made for the topic of the current grade and for all preceding topics of grades through which the pupil has passed.

## REMARKS ON THE SCHEDULED TOPICS FOR FIRST FOUR GRADES

### *I. Respect and Obedience*

*Respect* here relates to the honor and deference the child should manifest toward parents, teachers, public officials, aged persons, etc. It is based on the assumed consciousness of the child that they are interested in his welfare, desire his highest good and happiness, and that their knowledge and experience of life qualify them for giving advice and instruction.

*Obedience* is not blind submission nor servility. In its wide and beneficent sense it is the willing compliance of the child with requests, desires and directions of those who seek his ultimate good. It is a similar willing compliance with conventions, rules and laws made by competent authority for the common good. It is closely related to respect. The act of disobedience is the denial of respect.

### *II. Truthfulness and Honesty*

In addition to the grosser vices of falsehood and theft, these words have application to the entire field of deceitfulness, concealment of facts that rightfully should be made known, taking unfair advantage of others, etc. Untruthfulness is usually the chief element in dishonest practices.

### *III. Unselfishness and Justice*

These words have direct reference to the obligations and duties between men in both their individual and aggregate capacities. Social rights and duties, in essence, are scarcely distinguishable from each other. The duty of A with regard to B, is the right of B with regard to A.

The golden rule is an unerring guide in the elementary consideration of these topics.

The soul of real Americanism is probably more fully expressed by the word *justice* than by any other. This is evidenced as we study the characters of the great men whose memory we revere as founders and upholders of the nation. A striking example is that of Roosevelt who used with powerful effect the homely variants "fair play" and "square deal" in his passionate appeals in behalf of justice.

#### *IV. Cleanliness and Purity*

Both these words indicate freedom from whatever contaminates, soils, defiles and the like. The word *cleanliness* is usually applied with regard to what is external or superficial; *purity*, to the entire content of whatever is under consideration. In morals, cleanliness usually has reference to the body and its environment. Neatness and order in one's surroundings may be given place under this topic. The term *purity* is used in considering tendency and state of mind. It take cognizance of what enters the mind through associates, literature, the stage, music, motion pictures, etc., and also of what proceeds from the mind by spoken or written expression or other significant manifestation.

Many other topics of equal moral importance will occur to teachers and may be substituted for those here suggested if deemed advantageous. Great care should be exercised, however, not to reduce the time allotted to the chosen subject, and the schedule should be uniform for the entire school. Results will be weak if too much is undertaken in a given time allotment. One deep impression is far more to be desired than many shallow ones.

Important topics not embraced in the four-year schedule may be treated in a similar manner in the ensuing grades if time can be provided. Loyalty and duty, for example, might be considered in the fifth and sixth grades.

## CHAPTER VII.

### DRILL FOR HIGHER GRADES: DETAILS OF TRAINING

**B**EGINNING with the fifth year of school life, it may be assumed that the pupil has acquired substantial knowledge of the difference between right and wrong conduct in reference to the usual routine life of the home and school. In addition to what he would naturally learn of these things by observation and experience, he has had the direct instruction scheduled for the preceding grades. He should now be led to practice self-reliance in the acquittal of his moral obligations, cultivate self-control and train the will to quick decision in behalf of duty.

The public school is not an institution for the mere purpose of equipping children with certain itemized matters of scholarship. School life constitutes for youth a real field of responsibility with opportunity to qualify for the tasks of citizenship. The pupil's duties in this field are as serious and important as are those of his teachers. This he should be led to realize by giving him every reasonable encouragement on the one hand and by unhesitatingly checking his errors on the other. The measure of success reached by the pupil in this field of conduct is ascertained by considering the number and character of his offences, delinquencies and failures as they come naturally under observation and are recorded in the routine of school administration.

To show more clearly the motives and purposes embodied in the measures that follow, it will be helpful to review briefly certain features of public school administration, approved by long experience, that have high value in efficient training.

In the scholarship branches the practical results of the pupil's activities (recitations, drills, tests, examinations, etc.) are recorded day by day and these records constitute the basis of official action relative to his progress. From them reports are made and sent periodically to parents for their information and coöperation. At the end of the term these records determine the important questions of promotion, graduation, etc. It is *the use* thus made of the records that gives them their great value and supplies the compelling motive to application and sustained effort. Without such use their value would be insignificant.

Now, although records of conduct, more or less complete, are made in the schools, they have scarcely any value as a training agency. As has been shown in Chapter V, they serve only the immediate purpose of investigation with its resulting punitive action. There is no real training value in this procedure that leads the pupil to regard good conduct as a school purpose of the highest order, an asset of character to be developed to the utmost. On the contrary, it leaves in his mind merely the relationship between fault and penalty. He feels that he has paid the price of his misconduct and that the



moral slate can be kept clean at all times by purchase. He feels free to repeat on the same terms.

The sound and effective methods of training practiced in the scholarship subjects should be applied in the moral domain of pupil life through the medium of the conduct record. The conduct matters to receive attention should embrace, in particular, compliance with all regulations for the good order and efficiency of the school, effort to make progress in the course of study and endeavor to practice the moral precepts of social life. All significant incidents indicating carelessness, indifference or culpability relative to these matters should be recorded and the record *put to use* in making estimate of the pupil's response to training, in determining his title to reward, and as furnishing evidence to himself and others of the kind of character he is building.

Another detail of school practice in recording scholarship results is the marking system whereby estimates of knowledge, ability and proficiency are made by some conventional numerical scale. The familiar percentage scale is the one most favored. It affords a convenient and easy way to note progress and maintain uniformity in the grading of recitations and written work. We have become so expert in the use of such numerical scales that we are prone to regard their results as indisputable. A little reflection, however, should quickly dispel any delusions we may entertain on this subject. Pupils notoriously question their correctness, experts frequently disagree and few indeed will maintain that mentality is subject to accurate measurement of this kind. Such marks are, in fact, mere estimates, or approximations, that we accept and use because of their proved usefulness and value, with full knowledge of their uncertainties.

In a similar manner a conventional number system can be applied to the conduct records of pupils by which grades of standing may be quickly shown, progress noted and uniformity of action secured. No one, of course, will maintain that any such system will provide an accurate measure of conduct or of character; but, as in the case of scholarship subjects, it operates with substantial justice and facilitates administration.

That no such numerical scale has come into general use in public schools to record estimates of conduct is due to the fact that conduct is not regarded as a major factor in the training of pupils. As conduct has no decisive part in determining the pupil's right to promotion, or his title to rewards, honors, graduation, etc., no need has been felt for bringing it under careful estimate. Until this defect is remedied, appreciation of moral character will be lacking and the level of good citizenship will decline whatever intellectual attainments may be reached.

With reference to our attempted measurements of all such immaterial things as scholarship, conduct, intelligence, intellectuality, morality, etc., it is important to note that these great fields are continuities of boundless extent,

while our measurements, at the very best, can be applied only to a limited number of selected items or areas in the respective fields. Not only are these scattered measurements subject to error, but the vast areas that remain unmeasured leave our results open to grave question. The value of such measurements is to be discerned, not in their accuracy, but in the fact that our desire and effort to make appraisement of the qualities in view are indisputable testimony to our youth of the importance we attach to their possession. It is by such means, notwithstanding their imperfection, that we transmit our esteem of these worthy matters to our successors.

If, then, we wish to realize more substantial results from our public schools in the training to good conduct, in the forming of good habits, and the development of good character, the conduct records of pupils should be used in the same manner as the scholarship records are now used. They should be the chief feature in the Report to Parents, and the controlling factor in determining the right of pupils to school honors and advancement. It is plain that if no conduct records are made, good conduct will neither be prized nor improved; and that if records are made but not applied with their natural power as an uplifting force, their value is wasted.

The following schedule of conduct faults, embracing the usual offences and delinquencies of pupils, is offered as a basis upon which practical conduct training may be established. Some offences in their very nature are much more serious than others, and the seriousness that naturally attaches to a given offence is subject to modification by mitigating circumstances. These facts are recognized and dealt with at all times by principals, discipline officers and others in determining action upon complaints and reports under whatever administrative system they are operating.

Opposite the itemized faults are numerical estimates of their seriousness as compared with each other. Ranges of latitude are indicated in some of these estimates to permit the exercise of judgment as occasion may demand. The number finally decided upon for a particular act of misconduct may be regarded as the measure of its seriousness in terms of an ideal unit common to the entire schedule. A schedule of this kind prepared with care promotes uniformity, fairness and despatch in determining action. The total of the fault units on a pupil's record is directly indicative of his general conduct in comparison with others, or as compared with some assumed standard of conduct. A maximum number of fault units may be assigned for a term, or other period, as indicating a limit beyond which the pupil's conduct is deemed unsatisfactory. When such maximum number has been assigned, the conduct record may be expressed in terms of the familiar percentage scale if desired.

The schedule admits of easy modification. Experience and the good judgment of teachers and supervisors would soon beget improvement in all matters of detail and there would be rapid approach to standardized practice, such as now exists in the treatment of scholarship records.

SERIOUS OFFENCES INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE, ETC.

<i>Conduct Faults</i>	<i>Fault Units</i>
Absence—Unauthorized absence from school.....	40-30
Unauthorized absence from study, recitations, drills, etc.....	40-20
Assault—Vicious attack upon another person.....	40-30
Conduct—Scandalous or indecent conduct.....	40-30
Disobedience—Deliberate and wilful disobedience of directions given by proper authority .....	40
Refusal to comply with directions given by proper authority....	40
Unwillingness to comply with rules of the school.....	40-20
Duty—Gross neglect of duty, habitual failure to prepare lessons....	40
Neglect of duty, lesson unprepared.....	40-20
Neglect of duty, failure to bring required papers or work to recitation .....	40-10
Neglect of duty, reading irrelevant books, papers, etc., or otherwise improperly using the time in study or recitation period	40-20
Falsehood—(Any form or degree) .....	40-30
Fraud—Giving aid to, or receiving aid from, another pupil during recitation, test, or examination, or attempting to give or receive such aid .....	40
Contributing in any way to false roll call.....	40
Using book, printed or written matter, or any other illicit aid during recitation, test or examination.....	40
(Fraudulent conduct of any other kind).....	40-20
Gambling—(Any form of).....	40-20
Obscenity—(Any form of).....	40-20
Profanity (Any form of).....	40-20
Theft—(Any form of).....	40

OTHER OFFENCES

<i>Conduct Faults</i>	<i>Fault Units</i>
Carelessness—Carelessness in preparing written work of tests, examinations, etc. Each particular.....	2
Carelessness in leaving money or valuables exposed on desk or elsewhere .....	8
Carelessness in leaving unlocked the door of a room, a locker, wardrobe, drawer, etc., that is habitually secured with a key	8
(Carelessness of any kind likely to occasion trouble).....	8- 4

<i>Conduct Faults</i>	<i>Fault Units</i>
Conduct—Disorderly conduct of any kind detrimental to the purposes and reputation of the school.....	20- 8
Examples: Rough crowding anywhere in school building.....	12
Boisterous behavior in school building.....	12
Throwing food in lunch room or elsewhere.....	20
Littering floor of lunch room or other room.....	15
Throwing paper or other matter from window.....	15
Whistling in school building, etc.....	8
Disrespect—Gross disrespect to a teacher or other school official....	40-30
Disrespectful conduct in language or deportment toward any one in authority or to a visitor, etc.....	40-20
Duty—Slighting duty; inattention at recitation, lecture, study period, drill or other school exercise.....	30-12
Inattention or carelessness in performing assigned duties, messenger service, etc. ....	30- 8
Fighting—Fighting with another pupil .....	30- 8
Lateness—Late arriving at school .....	10- 6
Late at recitation, drill or any other school exercise.....	10- 6
Late in handing in official reports, statements, etc.....	20- 6
Late in returning to the school Reports to Parents, etc.....	20- 6
Loitering—Loitering in any part of school building during active periods .....	30- 6
Provocation—Using provoking or threatening words or menaces toward any one exercising official authority or toward another pupil .....	30-10
Public Property—Injury to, or destruction of, public property, such as breaking windows, instruments, apparatus, lunch room equipment, furniture, etc.	
If through carelessness .....	10
If wilful .....	30-10
Mutilation or defacement of works of art, mural decorations, walls or other surfaces of public buildings—	
If through carelessness .....	10
If wilful .....	30-10
Injury to, or destruction of, books by carelessness or by inconsiderate abuse .....	20- 4
Defacement of books by unauthorized notes, markings, etc.....	20- 4
Shirking—Shirking at any drill, exercise or duty .....	20-10
Slowness—Slow or reluctant in carrying out directions .....	10- 6
Statements—Making evasive, equivocating or prevaricating statement, etc. ....	30-10
Making frivolous excuse or statement.....	12- 6



<i>Conduct Faults</i>	<i>Fault Units</i>
Talking—Talking when or where prohibited, as in study or recitation room, assembly, laboratory, library, formations, passing through corridors, etc. ....	20- 6
Untidiness—Contents of desk, locker or other receptacle in disorder	12- 6
Scraps of paper, fragments of luncheon, rubbish, trash or litter of any kind in desk, locker or closet, etc. ....	12- 6
Littering floor with paper, pencil shavings or other trash. ....	12- 4

The following table of fault units assigned to the successive school years, beginning with the fifth, indicates limits beyond which the conduct of a pupil for the designated year is deemed unsatisfactory:

<i>School Year</i>	<i>Limiting Number of Fault Units</i>
5th.....	250
6th.....	220
Junior High School {	7th.....200
	8th.....180
	9th.....160
Senior High School {	10th.....140
	11th.....120
	12th.....100

When records are made up by terms instead of by years, the above numbers should be halved or equitably proportioned for the respective terms.

When the number of fault units received by a pupil for a year (or term) is in excess of the limit set for such period, he is judged deficient in conduct and will not be advanced in conduct grade. Such deficiency will stand against him until it shall have been made good in succeeding years (or terms). Good records may thus be used to cover past deficiencies by consolidation of the records, but they may not be used to cover deficiencies of succeeding terms. When by such consolidation or otherwise the entire conduct record is satisfactory at the end of a school year (or term), the record for such entire period is closed. Benefits from this period must not be carried forward to offset future deficiencies.

At the end of any recognized school course (such as that of the grammar school, the junior high school, etc.), when it is customary to award diplomas, honors and certificates, any pupil who remains, or is found, deficient in conduct in the final year of such course is disqualified for receiving the school diploma which, first of all, is a character testimonial.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### PROCEDURE AND COMMENT RELATIVE TO CONDUCT RECORDS

IT cannot be too strongly emphasized that fault units are not assigned as penalties or punishment for wrong conduct. Their only purpose is to supply a convenient means of recording misconduct, estimating its gravity and indicating the pupil's attitude toward his obligations as a member of society. They are a mere translation of the moral import embodied in English statement to a simple and convenient number scale. Punitive action relative to a report does not affect the record of fault units.

Inasmuch as the pupil is the maker of his own conduct record, and fault units are not assigned as punishment, there should be no hesitation on the part of teachers and other school authorities in making immediate report of offences coming under their notice. Such prompt action is highly advantageous in reference to minor offences for which effective correction is often found difficult. Admonition, warning and reproach are usually ineffective and they even lead the pupil to the false conception that the teacher shares largely with him the responsibility for his misconduct. This false conception is sometimes encouraged unwittingly by the attitude of principals and supervisors who expect teachers to control turbulent youngsters by some mysterious power of personality when words prove unavailing. "Action speaks louder than words," and by the silent disapproval involved in the routine report and the cumulative evidence of bad record, the pupil is brought to a realization of his error. By careful attention to minor faults many major ones will be avoided.

Repetition of offences indicating defiance or indifference should be promptly met by an increase or doubling up of the number of fault units assigned. This has special application to the minor offences. In these cases the gravity of the offence lies, not in the act itself, but in the more serious character indication behind it.

Serious offences of an exceptional nature, indicating moral turpitude or hardened contempt for authority may, in the discretion of the principal, subject the pupil at any time to be declared deficient in conduct and to answer before superior educational authorities.

When the official who makes report has reason to believe that a wrongful act (*e. g.*, injury to public property) was committed maliciously or wilfully, such characterization should be made in the report. In other cases it is sufficient to merely report facts, leaving for the investigation to determine the nature of contributing causes, whether through wilfulness, negligence, accident, etc.

When a pupil's misconduct is made the subject of report, he should be informed of the fact at the time the offence is committed, and the nature of

the misconduct should be made known to him. This may usually be done in a dignified manner in the presence of other pupils.

The periodical Report to Parents should show the total number of fault units on the pupil's record from the beginning of the year (or term). The limiting number of fault units for the year should also be shown, and, in case of serious bad conduct or of conduct approaching deficiency, appropriate comment should be made.

Nothing in the methods here advocated is intended to restrict in any way the right or duty of the principal to assign such legal punishments, penalties, restrictions, etc., for offences as he may deem necessary to the maintenance of high standards of order and efficiency. On the contrary, it is strongly urged that pupils of low or unsatisfactory conduct grade be restrained from participating in public school events, from holding school or class office and from taking part in any formal meeting where the repute and honor of the school are open to public view.

It is recommended that pupils of the fourth year have their conduct supervised and the total of their fault units recorded the same as provided for pupils in the succeeding years. The total number of fault units should appear on the Report to Parents. No further action, however, is contemplated in regard to this record. The purpose is to provide the pupil with an experimental period in preparation for his responsibilities in the following years.

Reports should be in writing, and should be filed as part of the pupil's school record. If circumstances justify a verbal report at any time, it should be promptly confirmed in writing. The method and form of making Report to Principal in common use in high schools seem entirely adequate to the purpose. Such report is usually made on a filing card and contains the requisite particulars for investigating and determining the gravity of the case.

The principal, or person designated by him, should act upon these reports without delay, clearing the records each day if possible. The number of fault units assigned for an offence should be recorded on the report card.

The light of publicity is a potent agency in the promotion of good morals. To secure its advantages the report cards should be arranged by school official classes either as they come into the principal's office or immediately after the cases are disposed of. Daily transcripts from the cards, covering the record for each class should then be made and sent to the respective class teachers for posting.

The class transcript should give the name, the offence and the action taken (number of fault units assigned, or explanation of pupil accepted) in the case of each pupil of the class who was reported on the day indicated. Posting of the transcripts should follow as closely as possible after the action has been taken. Such publicity is at once a deterrent to wrongdoers and a constant reminder to all of the value of good conduct.

The suggestion is sometimes advanced that incentive to moral conduct

would be stronger under a system by which pupils would be awarded direct credit for good conduct, for worthy acts of social service, for exceptional manifestation of good character, etc. Plausible as such a scheme might appear at first view, closer study will reveal inherent difficulties that compel its rejection.

Such method would involve the task of estimating the moral worth of individual acts widely diverse as to kind and almost limitless in number. It would be practically impossible to foresee them all and embody them in a working schedule. Rivalries, jealousies and dissatisfaction would ensue and pupils would be tempted to seek unusual and remote opportunities for gaining credits.

The moral worth of a good action cannot be safely measured by its seeming magnitude. Real motive is not always in evidence. Self-sacrifice or effort is not always known. No more powerful inducement, no greater encouragement to moral character, can be presented to pupils than the assurance that their conduct is always assumed to be good until by their own action the assumption is destroyed. Even then, they should understand that we desire to view their misconduct as an exceptional and unfortunate lapse from the high standard that all should maintain. (See also Chapter V on this topic.)

A pupil who will not, or who cannot, avoid wrong-doing is not progressing morally. One who does avoid wrong-doing is so progressing. He progresses by the moral decisions he makes, or, if former decisions have already led to habit, by fortifying his good habit. There is little room for middle ground in morality. If conduct is not wrong we may for all practical ends assume it to be right. In social practice good character is assumed until it is negated by evident, well recognized faults.

The change of practice herein advocated, whereby graduating diplomas would be unqualified testimonials of character and effort, bearing the promise of good citizenship, is one that educators sometimes seem reluctant to adopt. This is partly explained by natural unwillingness to abandon a practice upon which long usage and familiarity have seemingly spoken the final word. But there is more to say. Character demands to be heard. Public schools, in the minds of their administrators and of the public, no longer fill the mere incidental and auxiliary rôle of conferring the fundamentals of scholarship. They are the recognized chief agency in bringing up the children of the nation. They have practically accepted the task of converting the raw material of youth into the finished product of American manhood and womanhood. The home and the church have forfeited leadership and become contributing adjuncts only.

The schools have willingly entered the enlarged field of service that comprises unlimited details relative to the pupils' welfare. Deformities are corrected; teeth, tonsils, lungs and heart are carefully looked after; wholesome, nourishing food is supplied and clothing provided when the need is



apparent. Schools often furnish financial aid to assist worthy pupils to complete their education. They devise means to encourage economy and thrift and they assist pupils to obtain employment. In such undisputed sphere of primacy in equipping and fortifying our children for life the schools can no longer omit character from the program; and there is no place for character but the place of honor. That is its rightful place in all education, and its very nature forbids it to accept any other.

Apprehension is sometimes expressed that scholarship would suffer if the quality of the graduating diploma should be thus changed. To this it may be replied that it is unreasonable to believe that, when effort is stimulated, good conduct rewarded and good order improved, scholarship results will be impaired. It is unreasonable to believe that the superstructure of scholarship can be weakened by placing it upon firm foundation. The facts of actual experience show that in institutions where good conduct is made the basic requirement, the special aims are more easily realized. Even without these supporting reasons it yet remains true that impaired scholarship is a far less evil than impaired morals and neglected character.

The establishment of the character diploma is the pivotal feature of the training herein proposed. Any attempt to secure the conduct benefits set forth, while still retaining the scholarship diploma, involves a fatal self-contradiction that renders it futile. If the Pretender is upheld, the deposed Sovereign is powerless. Such attempt would merely confirm the conditions already existing.

The following forms for character diplomas are offered merely as illustrative of the ideas to be conveyed by such testimonials. Both form and phraseology may be readily modified without affecting the essential purpose of the documents.

(For Elementary Schools)

# THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

of

.....

Confers upon A.....B.....this

## CHARACTER DIPLOMA

in recognition of his (her) *Earnest Endeavor* and consistent *Good Conduct* in the pursuance of scholarship tasks and in meeting the obligations of school life, during eight years of training in the *Elementary Schools*.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF we have affixed our signatures hereto this

.....day of .....19...

etc.

[SEAL]

etc.

(For High Schools)

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
of

.....

During.....years of training in the.....High School

A.....B.....

has made *Earnest Endeavor* in pursuance of his (her) scholarship tasks,  
manifested consistent *Good Conduct* in meeting the obligations of school life  
and shown an *Appreciation of Moral Standards* that gives promise of *Good  
Citizenship*.

In recognition and testimony whereof the *Department of Education* of  
the.....confers upon him (her) this CHARACTER  
DIPLOMA and commends him (her) to the *Citizens of*.....  
as one worthy of *confidence* and deserving of their *esteem*.

GIVEN in the.....  
this .....day of.....19.....  
etc. etc.

[SEAL]

## CHAPTER IX.

### ADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSED METHODS

1. A character diploma based on the conduct record fixes the attention of parents, teachers and pupils upon the supreme import of moral conduct in all human relations. Community life that recognizes this supremacy is established on the surest foundation. In the last analysis this is the basis of all free governments. Recognition of moral responsibility is antecedent to any faith in charters, declarations or constitutions; and it can be kept alive only by indoctrinating the children and youth of successive generations. Under the wholesome influence of this conception, culture, wealth, intellectuality, science, etc., find their appropriate and subordinate domains, self-control is developed and good citizenship promoted.

2. When parents realize that the aim of the school is to develop good character and that the success of their children is dependent, first of all, upon their conduct in manifestation of the time-honored virtues, they will coöperate spontaneously and effectively. Discipline in the home will be revived and will strongly reinforce that of the school. Unfavorable school reports on the basis of conduct, indicating possible failure to gain the character diploma, would release invigorating measures in the home that are too often dormant, and that are not elsewhere available. When success is dependent upon scholarship, the home is usually incompetent to give direct aid, and coöperation is weak and spiritless.

3. Improved scholarship results will quickly follow. The basic conditions of efficiency in group operations are good order and willing compliance with authorized plans. These benefits are realized in our National Academies and other national institutions of training. Under the proposed methods neglect of study and failure to make effort, entail immediate and progressive injury to the pupil's record. This obvious injury furnishes to the careless and indifferent pupil motive for application to his tasks that he would otherwise not have. Improved discipline and order contribute directly to contagious study-room spirit, and thereby to higher levels of scholarship.

4. Sound Americanism is developed. Stripped of all that is merely spectacular and bombastic, Americanism is the national exemplification of the basic virtues. These are its spiritual springs. Americanism, as expressed by the lives of our Immortals, is radiant with the love for truth and justice. These were the altars at which they worshipped and made continual sacrifice; and their great achievements were wrought by the spontaneous and irrepressible overflow of their love for these virtues.

Government of any kind from despotism to the most liberal democracy may be regarded as a combination of *law making* and *law observance*. Of

these two components willing observance of laws, particularly in a republic, is a more vital matter and one far more difficult to obtain than the making of laws, which is a comparatively simple task. The practice of law observance, encouraged to the utmost by our methods of training, will lead directly to sound Americanism and strengthen the State by increased devotion to its institutions.

5. The true purpose of public schools is kept distinctly in view by the measures herein advocated. These schools are established for the general welfare, looking to good citizenship through training of the young. They are maintained primarily for the strength and safety of the State. It is *the duty* of the pupil to qualify himself in the highest degree for his responsibilities and service to society. Our National Academies are maintained by funds from the national treasury. A Midshipman or Cadet who neglects his study, who fails to realize his duty to develop good character and equip himself for service, is quickly brought to task. Our public schools are likewise maintained by public funds. The burden of taxation weighs heavily. Is the public school pupil,—the future citizen,—under any less obligation to fit himself for his country's service and defense than those who specialize in military matters? Is it not a fact that the basic qualifications of good citizenship for the duties of peace are as potent and necessary for national endurance as are the qualifications for war? If so, then our youth should be led to realize these facts. Duty and effort should be encouraged and their neglect should find no reward.

Public schools are not mere benevolent institutions wherein boys and girls are given opportunity to equip themselves for individual advantage and profit in life's contests. It is true, and fortunately true, that in doing his duty to the State the pupil also, in large measure, serves himself. But this is incidental only. The schools exist for public uplift and in their administration and operation *duty*, not privilege, is the supreme call to pupils no less than to teachers.

The familiar statement that our children during their school years are "preparing for life," is one of those half truths that often ensnare us into error. When this statement is accepted as a sufficient whole, with its limitations undisclosed, the erroneous inference that responsible life begins only after leaving school easily follows. The omitted facts that children are actually in life during their school years and that they have duties within the range of their capacity that they cannot safely evade, are certainly not the less important part of the whole truth. Preparation for future duties is involved of course; but the best preparation for all future duties is the diligent performance of present ones. Pupils should be held to the fundamental duties of life by knowledge that failure to make effort for character and learning marks them unsatisfactory and unworthy of high esteem.



6. The true basis of military efficiency is laid. Contrary to popular belief the value and benefit of military training are found not so much in the technical drills, manual of arms, marching, manouvering, etc., as in the life and discipline of the camp. Technical drills develop skill but they contribute only incidentally to soldierly character. No amount of such drill can ever make a good soldier out of a bad man. The virtues of truthfulness, loyalty, reliability, unselfishness, etc., so essential to social life in general, are doubly necessary in camp and on shipboard where crowded conditions prevail. The habit of willing compliance with the rules and regulations of camp and ship life, established for no other purpose than the common good, is indispensable to military efficiency.

Military training for all the young men of the nation is often strongly urged as necessary to our defense. It is the technical training with weapons that is thus contemplated. Desirable as such training may be, the basic training of the man himself is the more important. Technical skill presents no serious problem. Character, however, is a matter of time and of habits. The recruit who comes with fundamental soldierly qualities and no technical skill is a more advanced soldier than one with technical skill but of undeveloped character. Thus by the school training here advocated the basis of military character and efficiency is incidentally laid without the use of gun or uniform.

7. A close relationship between religion and morality is commonly recognized. Religious belief contributes directly to morality in our conduct toward each other; and, reciprocally, good moral habits naturally predispose the mind to ready acceptance of a religious faith. Direct moral training in our schools would thus enrich the religious life of the community. It would antagonize no religious groups, and its benefits would be distributed impartially among them.

8. The school records would give early indication of those whose conduct would justify special watchfulness. The public discredit attached to unsatisfactory conduct, or to failure to receive the character diploma, would constitute a stronger motive to effort and success than does the discredit that pertains to a scholarship failure. An unsuccessful pupil in scholarship can always claim, and sometimes truly, that his failure was due to inability and not to lack of effort or willingness. Such claim cannot reasonably be made regarding conduct failure.

The bad conduct and vicious habits of children on the street often go unchecked because of no practical restraining measures that can be conveniently applied. They feel safe from supervision and correction outside of school hours. Police authorities and citizens generally are reluctant to make arrests except in extreme cases. Unchecked habits as to minor offences soon develop into gangster vices characterized by recklessness and defiance.

To meet this condition the suggestion is offered that the conduct records

of the school be open to the entry of serious offences wherever committed. The schools are the recognized headquarters for character and citizenship training. Reports of such offences committed outside of school should, of course, be fully authenticated by police authorities or credible witnesses. Treatment of these faults in the same manner as if they were committed in school would seem to be a natural corrective measure.

9. Scout training, valuable as it may be, is not as efficacious for character building as the school training here proposed. Scout activities are largely for recreation; the duties are of a fictitious nature and they are practiced by the comparatively few who volunteer for membership. On the other hand, the many duties of school life are real, the pupil is under moral obligation to fulfil them, and under compulsory education, none can evade the training.

10. "Discipline," in the narrow sense as the mere maintenance of good order in the conduct of school activities, practically disappears as a "problem" by the methods advocated. "Discipline," the problem, solves itself automatically by merger in the superior educational discipline that signifies training. When conduct is established as the supreme matter in the administration of the schools, the pupil's attitude toward it becomes serious. Disturbing antics and the testing out and baiting of teachers lose their heroic interest and are found to be costly diversions. The method will prove helpful to teachers who are recognized as excellent instructors but who are not rated high as disciplinarians.

11. Destructive radicalism tending toward violence and anarchy is corrected more effectively by habits engendered from actual compliance with law and order than by written or oral instruction of any kind. There are no more loyal supporters of social order than the groups accustomed to rigid discipline. Our city police force, firemen, postmen, State and National military forces, are outstanding illustrations. However carefully children may be instructed by word if their wayward conduct is unchecked they gravitate to the ways of violence and crime.

12. The conduct course in the High School would constitute a most desirable preparation for the enlarged freedom of college life. The practise of self-control and the making of moral decisions in behalf of right during the school years would strengthen character and furnish moral equipment that would contribute strong uplift in maintaining the student life of the colleges on a high plane.

13. The character diploma earned by faithful effort and self-control has significant value for business and social purposes far beyond that of the scholarship diploma. It is, in itself, a testimonial of the highest order and needs no character backing by individual personal certificates so often asked for.

14. Making conduct the basis of school life, motive, effort, character appraisal and reward, entails no significant change in any course of study or training. It conflicts in no way with special methods or devices that have moral character for their aim.

15. The adoption of conduct training as herein proposed involves no significant expense.

Attempts of whatever kind to administer character education as something merely adjunctive or incidental to scholarship will be futile. Character is fundamental. Other things may be based upon it; but when superstructure is used for foundation, the "workmen labor in vain."

## CHAPTER X.

### EXALTATION OF SCHOLARSHIP OVER CHARACTER A SERIOUS DEFECT IN PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

THE chief defect in public school education is the failure to impress upon children and youth the supreme importance of moral character as the foundation of individual and social welfare. So long has the scholarship aim of the schools dominated their activities that the national mind has become charged with grave error, and we are persuading ourselves to build for social happiness upon the treacherous basis of intellectuality instead of founding our structure upon time-proved moral character. Scholarship and intellectuality, to whatever extent pursued, have but little, if any, power in themselves to harmonize and regulate social life. Men of trained intellect fall into error and oppose each other on serious issues as readily as do those less favored. Whether the controversy is between giants or pygmies, truth remains undisclosed until reduced from the ores of uncertainty in the crucible of actual experience. It is only upon the time-honored moral foundations that we find the common meeting place of hearts and minds. Here, and here only, we may hope to harmonize our lives by embracing those precepts of conduct whose truth and virtue are attested from age to age.

Because of our incomplete methods of conduct training, the lack of inducement offered for self-control of conduct, and by the meanings we give to the words *success* and *failure* as applied to school results, pupils cannot fail to hold scholarship as the most important equipment for life. While they are rarely taught this error by open words, they are taught it, and the impression is deeply made, by the deeds and practices of the school system. Until moral character is honored in fact by school practice as superior to every other endowment or acquirement, national training will fall short of its highest purpose.

There is little room for controversy over the statement that character is the preëminent aim of education. It is here contended, however, that whatever may be the worthy motives and purposes of our educational leaders the practical operation of our public school system obscures and defeats the true aim, and leaves in the minds of pupils the false belief that scholarship and intellectuality are the real prizes of life,—the coveted keys of worldly success, honor and happiness. Indoctrinated with this belief through school experience, they pass on to parenthood and contribute to the new generation the added influence of the home in perpetuation of the error.

The sources of this error and its contributing causes have been considered in Chapter III. and their review is here unnecessary. But it is pertinent to say that the almost unnoticed growth of the fault and the long period through which it has been operative, add to the difficulty of reformation.



Educators and parents alike, familiar from childhood with the existing system, products of its methods, and taught to believe in its superior excellence, are naturally skeptical as to the need of change. But readjustment is absolutely necessary if the essential aim of education is to be realized.

Many educators, however, dispute the need of any such readjustment and assert that moral character is, in fact, the supreme aim of the system notwithstanding the manifest effort and pressure applied directly to the development of scholarship. It is contended that good character silently takes form and shape through the instrumentality of the scholarship course, and that its mysterious substance is too elusive to be grasped by direct approach. Other similar contentions in behalf of the existing method, when examined, are found at times to be contradictory to each other, or to involve excuses rather than reasons for the omission of direct, intensive, character training from the school program.

When we consider the wonderful achievements wrought by man, the results of unyielding effort applied directly to the solution of intellectual and material problems in every field of endeavor,—very miracles of accomplishment in these later days,—we are reluctant indeed to believe that the training of children to good character is a problem of such hopeless mystery that we must trust the outcome to the undirected influences that accompany effort along other lines. Our reluctance is further confirmed when we reflect that in the animal world the capacity of the mature individuals to train their young to advantageous and safe habits of life is natural and almost universal.

We cannot, therefore, assent to the claim made in behalf of our schools as now conducted, that character is, in effect, their chief aim, without a closer examination of their methods and operation. As a part of such examination, we will also endeavor to discover the nature of the deep impress that school experience, as a whole, makes upon the mind of the pupils.

Slowly, but none the less surely, from the first school day, this impress acquires permanency and becomes the background of the mental picture across which pass the varied and more transient incidents of daily school life. It is what ultimately settles in the mind of the pupil that counts; and in this residual, visualized experience he ever after interprets for himself the ideals, purposes and results of the school system. His interpretation may be faulty as to the ideals and purposes in the mind of those who administer the system, but it is unerringly true from the standpoint of actual results effected in his own mind. Archers do not always hit the target at which they aim. The heart desire of the teacher may fail of expression through multiplicity of routine duties, or because of prescribed lines of effort that must be followed to maintain professional standing and qualify for advancement. Without careful prevision the administration of any large system tends to machine-like formality and may be dehumanized to a state of moral incapacity.

In any attempt then to ascertain the nature of the real impress made

upon its wards by the public school, as regards the relative valuations set upon character and scholarship, we cannot safely limit consideration to the high ideals that may be in the mind of teachers, nor yet to the recognized merits of any system dependent upon fallible human agency for its operation. We must examine the mental atmosphere created by school life. We must look at the actual processes of the system, to the tangible and spiritual incentives that motivate both teachers and pupils, and to the ideals toward which pupils are attracted or urged. Moreover, in such survey we must recognize the controlling power of deeds over words, of practice over precept and of performance over promise, as they mark out initial footpaths in the young mind which by repeated use, become, later, the beaten highways of thought, desire and purpose.

With the preceding suggestions in mind, let us briefly review some of the characteristic and basic features of the public school system as evidenced by the facts of actual structure and operation. It is systematically graded from kindergarten to university with courses of study adapted to the successive school years. High school scholarship courses are planned to meet college entrance requirements and to this end close relationship is maintained with the private colleges through educational associations representative of both interests. This bond of unity between the public schools and private institutions is further strengthened by reciprocal benefits that are not wholly altruistic. Public high schools make vast contribution to the student enrollment of the colleges, and the colleges, in turn, furnish opportunity for advancement and place to capable and ambitious leaders in the school system.

To accomplish the high school course in the allotted time, it is necessary that pupils enter these schools with definite minimum requirements of preparation. This means that the elementary schools have a definite scholarship goal for their graduating classes to reach, and this goal must be attained by predetermined yearly advances from the lowest grade. The experience of teachers in both the elementary and high schools furnishes abundant evidence of the great effort required to accomplish their tasks. As thus far outlined, there is little or no cause for dissatisfaction. Scholarship is an important school purpose, standards are necessary, and effort of both teachers and pupils is desirable and expected.

At this point, however, we note the omission in the school programs of any definite authorized requirements for the building of moral character. The system is specifically designed to register scholarship, and if this purpose is accompanied by any moral results they must be welcomed as fortuitous by-products. Also we may note that with the best efforts, only a small percentage of elementary pupils enter high school, and of these only about twenty per cent continue on to graduation. The vast majority leave the system at various stages to take up the activities and burdens of serious life in a world wherein moral character offers the only hope of peace and progress. While

stupendous effort is thus manifest in an endeavor that qualifies a comparatively few for college, we fail to discern any similar effort to qualify the vast number for entrance into the exacting university of life with its inescapable moral curriculum.

Looking next at the selection and composition of the teaching force, we observe that it is recruited chiefly from training schools and colleges. The main qualifications are scholarship equipment, knowledge of the principles and practice of teaching, and good moral character. Possession of the necessary qualifications is ascertained by examinations, certified records of service, college and training school degrees, etc. As direct moral training is not listed as an item in public school courses, it is not surprising that special preparation for administering it is deemed unnecessary. The subject is given little or no attention in examinations for teachers and in training school courses. While theoretically holding to the proposition that good character is the chief educational aim, the administrators of the system evidently believe that there is no knowledge of any value that bears on the direct process of reaching the aim; or that, if such knowledge exists, all teachers are naturally and sufficiently endowed with it. No such optimistic belief is held, however, regarding the scholarship aim, as to which the highest standards of professional qualification are demanded.

In the same line of vision, we may next observe the direction of effort and kind of results that gain approval and advancement for teachers after appointment. The view is clear and the visual reaction unmistakable. As the daily and monthly results of teaching effort are brought in for appraisal, it is evident that scholarship is the cherished product. Other results and gleanings may have some recognized value, far removed, however, from competitive significance. The professional atmosphere of school life is charged with hopes and apprehensions relative to scholarship percentages. Individual recitations, drill papers and examinations are measured and recorded by a percentage scale, and from them are compiled scholarship results for classes, schools, districts and states. These percentages are the ever recurring topic of conversation among teachers and of formal discussion in official conferences. The emotional interest they incite is manifest, according to circumstances, between such opposite moods as elation and depression, sympathy and envy, congratulation and condolence.

The cause of these manifestations is obvious in the fact that, in large measure, scholarship percentages are the basis of rewards, advancement and professional repute for the entire personnel of the system. Superintendents have a personal interest in their district percentages. Principals are rated by their school percentages, and teachers by the percentages shown by their classes. Such powerful pressure for scholarship results, thus transmitted throughout the system, cumulative at every link in the chain of supervision, is unquestionably adapted to obtain the maximum production. But incentive



to any purposive effort toward character development is strangely missing. Teachers frequently shed tears, principals show anger, superintendents become vexed and college faculties are disappointed when classes or schools fail to reach some set scholarship grade. But any such manifestations regarding character results are yet to be reported. If these vitally important character results are satisfactory, why the tears when joy should rule? If character results are not satisfactory there is, indeed, real cause for grief; responsibility should be fixed and remedy found.

Although conclusion as to the matter under discussion seems beyond need of further strengthening, it is immediately confirmed when we pass to consideration of the incentives offered to pupils. If good advice, persuasion and occasional punishment were adequate to impress the pupil with the value of moral character and lead him to make it his chief acquisition, there would be some reason for encouragement. But even the little help that such weak agencies afford is further reduced by the overwhelming pressure for scholarship. While effort to build character ends in words, scholarship effort is energized by rewards of surpassing potency. Public approbation, promotion and graduation are based upon success in this effort. The highest prize of the public school course, the graduation diploma, is, essentially, a scholarship trophy.

If a pupil of doubtful character, whose conduct record is unpraiseworthy, obtains the required scholarship percentage, he is accepted for graduation honors, receives public applause, is rewarded with the diploma and acclaimed a "success." He has contributed to the result in which officials of the system also find their reward. A pupil of good character and irreproachable conduct record who does not obtain the required scholarship percentage, receives no diploma, and is pityingly, sometimes contemptuously, characterized as a "failure." He has reduced the averages upon which judgments of teacher and school are based. Such pupil may have possessed sound mentality, but have been slow or backward in reasoning processes, or lacked gift of accurate expression. He may have been handicapped by hereditary antecedents or home conditions. Many such "failures" in their later years have made valuable contribution to the arts and sciences and to improvement in modes of living. Thus boys and girls possessing desirable qualities for citizenship and parenthood are subject to the depressing judgment of "failure," pronounced by the school system, before beginning life's serious work.

What avails us to laud the golden wealth of character when its attainment is disregarded and we bestow our rewards upon the inferior ores of scholarship.

An elaborate system of measuring scholarship results has been devised, and certain minimum requirements of time and results must be met by pupils in evidence of satisfactory scholarship training. The character results of school life, however, yet go unmeasured, and no serious effort is made to devise methods of measurement or to adopt standards. Moreover there is no



minimum time requirement to which the pupil is subject in regard to the all-important matter of character training. If he can complete his scholarship work in half of the usual time, he escapes half the course in character training though he may need it badly. It is difficult indeed to reconcile such conditions with the assertion that character is the real aim of school effort. The more logical conclusion, drawn from school practice, would designate it as an attribute or dependency of scholarship.

In school and department conferences and in faculty meetings, there is abundant discussion of methods and devices for improving the teaching of scholarship subjects. Motive for improvement in scholarship work is never lacking, and any contribution that promises to raise class or school averages by even fractional increments is welcomed for discussion and put to experiment. Principals and supervisors never cease to urge progress along this line. On the other hand, how little time in these conferences is devoted to serious discussion of methods of character training!

A characteristic incident illustrative of the attitude of our public schools toward character development occurred a few years ago in one of the best high schools in the Middle States, noted both for the high order of its scholarship work and its discipline. After the school had been in operation a number of years an honor society of pupils was organized under the supervision of the faculty, with membership based in part upon noteworthy good character. In the course of time, it was thought desirable to have honorary members chosen from the classes antedating the formation of the society, so that the rolls might embrace representation of every class in the history of the institution. When the school records were reviewed to ascertain the names of those who were eligible for choice, there was no difficulty in determining scholarship qualifications running back through all the classes. Ratings for the year, for the month, for examinations, tests, and sometimes for daily recitations were readily available. But for character qualification only fragmentary and incidental knowledge was revealed by the records. Appeal was made to teachers for memory data to fill out, as best they could, the desired list, and comment was freely made as to the faintness of character impress made upon their minds by many of their former pupils, and satisfactory selection was difficult.

If the foregoing statements are not in gross and palpable error, conclusion is inevitable that the public school system, in its operation and results, sets forth its product of scholarship and intellectuality as qualification and equipment for human life more to be desired than moral character. Of course, no such error is entertained by the administrators of the system; still less is there intent to induce it in the minds of others. But it is the unfortunate fact that such impress is made upon the minds of pupils by their school experience. Such is the result, notwithstanding the good intentions of administrators and their belief that moral character is mysteriously generated by

the scholarship courses; and notwithstanding even the words of wisdom and instruction, jewels of truth though they may be, presented to the pupils from time to time at dress parade functions.

It is not going far afield for more direct evidence in support of the conclusion stated, to make reference to the increase of immorality and crime manifest on every hand. Public records show that the larger number of burglaries, hold-ups and other forms of criminality, are committed by persons from sixteen to twenty-six years of age, and we are becoming accustomed to stories of children of nine and ten years haled to court on criminal charges. With few exceptions, these youths and young men have had public school training, and not a few have had two or more years in high school. Compulsory education laws by implication, if not by direct mandate, impose heavy responsibility upon the public schools for the moral integrity of our citizenship, and in pursuance of their grave duty character training should have foremost place.

The mental attitude of teachers toward educational aims is greatly influenced by the conditions under which their work is done. Professional and common judgment as to the efficiency and progress of public education is based so widely upon scholarship results that these are kept constantly under measurement and test. The strong pressure of various kinds to which teachers are subject in the endeavor to obtain high records for their classes, to prepare graduating classes for high school and thence onward to higher institutions, keeps their minds constantly on the scholarship course. Under such conditions education becomes narrowed and so identified with scholarship that it loses its larger and true import. The part is mistaken for the whole. As the teacher takes sight over the course of endeavor, the college door opening to higher education seems clearly to be the target of educational aim. It is manifest that as long as the success of an educational system is measured by the number or proportion of pupils who reach this special target, so long will the minds of the teachers be diverted from the more important functions of their calling, and the silent unpremeditated influence of their mental attitude cannot fail to impart the same error to their pupils.

The education of a nation is a project of vast scope that should seek to confer its benefits in the highest measure upon the entire body of its citizenship. If, through any error of plan, organization or administration, we lose sight of fundamental needs applicable to all elements of society in its entirety, and concentrate attention upon the special requirements of a class or group, we will fail of our mission however attractive and worthy such limited objective may appear. If the minds of educators are habitually engrossed with the duty of equipping fifteen per cent of our children for college then we will be neglecting the far greater duty of concentrating mind and effort upon the equipment essential to the welfare of the multitudes who enter into life's sterner tasks through the wide portals of chance and necessity.

It is the mental objective of educators that dominates and determines the result. If that objective is college entrance, then scholarship will be stressed and all else will be secondary. But if the broad field of human life is made the mental objective, and our minds are fixed upon the masses that inevitably and ever will be engaged with the coarser tasks of the world, we will be conscious of a far more pressing need. National deficiency in scholarship may, indeed, be a great misfortune; but the moral failure of nations is the ever-recurring tragedy of history. The great social problems, born of primary emotions, upon the solution of which depends the happiness of the individual and the endurance of the State, are not amenable to the rules of mathematics or of literature. Such scholarship attainments are of secondary import only, and are futile as moral solvents. The serious fundamental problems of social life lie in the moral realm of our nature, and unless the mind and effort of teachers are directed constantly to this field, these problems will go unsolved. Such failure of the educational foundation entails the inescapable doom of the entire social edifice.

When the moral need of the entire school population is recognized as the supremely important matter, and becomes the leading objective of educational effort, then the problem of moral training will not only quickly be in process of solution, but it will be found that the solution in no way interferes with, or curtails, the scholarship or other training now given. On the contrary, this training, springing from a better moral basis, will be facilitated and improved.

The steadfast gaze of educators should be upon the broad field of human life and not on the college entrance door. Children should be equipped, first of all, in the best way to meet the serious experiences of life, whatever the place they may chance to occupy, rather than with a training adapted to a special end; and such equipment is unknown outside of strong moral character.

## CHAPTER XI.

### DISCIPLINE METHODS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS INCOMPLETE

THE usual disciplinary measures relative to conduct in our public schools are the direct consequence of motive centered on the scholarship aim. These two features of school work are so directly related that for purposes of discussion and remedial treatment they may be regarded as a unit. With the aim directed to scholarship we are interested in good conduct merely as a condition that permits the uninterrupted course of school routine. When misconduct becomes detrimental to this routine or transcends recognized limits of toleration it is checked by penalties. Within these limits it is usually resisted by reiterated words of persuasion, admonition, rebuke and the like. There is, in this, no forward look toward improvement in conduct as having its own worthy ends in view. Improvement is held desirable only as it benefits other aims. There is no attempt at systematic measurement of progress, and no potent incentive offered to engage the effort of pupils toward self-improvement.

Such measures do not constitute real conduct training and are unworthy of consideration as so doing. They are negative rather than positive in character. Repression and penalty are in evidence, but stimulation and reward for development are lacking. The word *discipline* in connection with these methods is justifiable only in its narrow sense relative to correction through deterrence and punishment. Its constructive educational significance is not here discerned. "The problem of discipline" is a familiar educational phrase that aptly reflects the attitude of many educators relative to the conduct of pupils. From this viewpoint misconduct is an unfortunate obstacle in the pathway to scholarship and its removal is a serious "problem."

Discipline, as thus regarded, will ever be a problem. What punishments are available to suppress the many minor delinquencies of pupils? What punishments are in the hands of the principal to cope adequately with more serious offences? And, still more pertinent to the problem, what can punishment of any kind accomplish in the constructive process of character building?

Because of this "problem," pupils, as a rule, enjoy quite a free hand to do what they please up to certain limits beyond which penalties begin to operate. When they leave school these school limits and penalties automatically disappear and the only barriers to unrestrained license are the penalties of the law, which too many of them soon reach. Claim will hardly be made that this kind of discipline is a positive factor in character building. It lacks all motive to progressive development of good conduct.

The difficulties of discipline are not always measured by the gravity of the offence. Serious breaches of good conduct in school are not frequent,



they are usually handled directly by the principal, and they justify penalties whose severity may render them effective. "The problem of discipline" presents its difficulties more often in the form of petty, annoying, and vexatious practices for which severe penalties are not appropriate, and for which words and mild measures prove ineffective. Even under aggravating circumstances teachers do not like to report so-called trifling faults to the principal and they are discouraged from so doing.

Such minor items of misconduct need to be dealt with promptly, with few or no words, on the basis of the wrong done to others. Rules and regulations of the school, recognized social conventions, and the well known fundamentals of moral conduct, alike find their justification in the desire and endeavor to serve the common good. To violate any of these requirements entails inconvenience, suffering or injury to others. If this were not true, the particular requirement would not exist. Such faults of the classroom are too often regarded merely as affecting the perpetrator himself. We pity his moral state. We plead with him in his own behalf. We picture the injury he is doing to himself and the unhappy end toward which he is traveling. Our pleadings often fail; for while he may smilingly appreciate our solicitude, in supreme self-confidence he feels that it is wasted. It is far easier and more potent in such cases to base action directly, and with little discussion, upon the wrong done to others. By this course the disturber learns that, whether he is an enemy to himself or not, he is such to society, and society will defend itself.

Failing to establish the moral qualities as supreme, discipline itself becomes weakened and we are accustomed not only to sporadic insubordination in classrooms where the sweet influence of woman is relied upon to persuade young bullies to do right, but we even witness wholesale "strikes" on the part of children to force the hands of authority. The first duty of every nation is to train its children and such children *have not been trained*, however much they may have been "educated."

Is it possible that children are gradually acquiring ascendancy over parents and teachers? Do we temporize and yield under fear that they will "quit," "walk out," defy and dominate us if we do our plain duty in their behalf? Have we surrendered our natural authority and abandoned parental obligation? If so, correction should not be delayed; for *exactly to the extent that we lose control over our children, do we lose our self-control as a nation* and imperil the foundations of the State.

The incompleteness of our discipline methods, ending with persuasion, lecture, or punishment, seems manifest. The "discipline problem" is inherent in the system and persists with it. It is removable only by adopting a system that embodies incentive for self-effort to do right and avoid wrong.

Heedless of the real school life of the pupil as the natural and best field of drill, plans for character training have been based upon discussion and

debate by pupils of ethical questions relating to school life; limited participation in school government; the institution of pupil legislatures, courts and police duties; honor systems, and other similar means. While some merit may be found in these inventions, they lack virtue from the fact that both pupil and teacher are fully conscious of their artificiality and recognize them as "make believes." Such basic matters as honesty, truthfulness, respect for authority, etc., are too serious to be considered in any secondary way suggestive of simulation. These virtues should be presented directly upon the basis of their inherent, unchallenged worthiness.

Some mistaken conceptions detrimental to public school efficiency have developed as outgrowths of the more fundamental defects indicated. There is an unfortunate tendency to regard the school experience of the child largely as an entertainment period during which it is reprehensible to impose upon him any burden of responsibility. We would shield him as long as possible from the serious trials and difficulties inseparable from human life. We try to delude him and ourselves by the half-truth that he is not really "in life" as yet, but merely "in school." It is only when he leaves school that he makes abrupt entry "into life," like the diver plunging into the pool, and we anxiously hope he will be able to swim. Pupils over ten years of age subject to such misconception are unfortunate indeed. They are as much "in life" while in school as after leaving it, and their life in both home and school is charged with responsibilities appropriate to their age and understanding. Habits formed in youth dominate in later life. The natural drill material of character in schools is the open life of the pupil embracing all of his activities and duties.

What more desirable field of training can there be for these future citizens than their habitual activities in association with their teachers and with each other? What better preparation can be found to meet the inescapable judgments of the world than the application to their conduct during school life of the same kind of tests and judgments that they must meet afterward? Such training in the field of conduct, of vital importance to the nation, finds no official place on school programs. Direct efforts to impress children and indoctrinate the nation with moral motive are confined almost wholly to words, and these, alone, are ineffective.

Another example of erroneous conception that too often finds lodgment in the public mind is that regarding the chief purpose for which public schools are maintained. The inspiring facts that these schools are established to serve the State and that it is their function to develop strong citizenship, founded upon integrity and intelligence as the only reliance for national security and happiness, have been displaced in large measure by the unwholesome notion that they are great beneficent institutions whereby those of our youth who are so disposed may profit personally through the advantages of education. That these individualistic ends are served by the schools is true,

but this service is incidental only to the real purpose. When "the *advantages* of an education" are stressed in public discussion and made the basis of appeal to pupils, while the lofty purpose of the schools is obscured, we are weakening the power of these institutions, lessening the respect due them, and catering to the destructive spirit of selfish competition. If they are merely refreshing fountains of knowledge, where those may drink who will we, naturally, are little concerned about those who manifest no thirst. When we invite and urge them to partake, we are virtually conceding that public education is merely a *privilege* that they are free to decline if they so choose, and many of them so regard our appeal.

If, however, we keep steadily in mind the noble purpose of the schools, and remember the patriotic sacrifice the people make for their maintenance, we stand on firm and commanding ground. We are drawn into no questionable debate with the young generation as to their duties, rights and privileges as future citizens responsible for their country's honor and welfare. It becomes at once clear to all—pupils, parents and teachers—that it is *the duty* of the pupil to equip himself to the utmost for the serious tasks of life. He has no privilege of exemption. Manifestation of unwillingness to apply himself earnestly to school tasks is far more serious as a matter of character than any defect of scholarship it may entail.

Among the defects of public school administration relative to character training and their serious consequences, may be noted the following:

1. By our lack of earnest, direct effort to *form* the character of adolescents, we are driven to the illogical and almost hopeless task of *re-forming* the character of adult criminals. That money and effort should be willingly applied by the public to this latter task while neglecting the earlier and richer field of fruitage is an amazing procedure.

2. The strongest encouragement and the highest rewards are indispensable as incentives to effort in character training. By applying these incentives to scholarship we forfeit our influence, and are left almost empty handed, in the control of character. Deprived of the power inherent in reward to mould character, we are thrown back upon punishment on the one hand, or idle persuasion on the other. These makeshifts are equally unavailing and charged with disappointment.

Modern practice in character building and reformation is based almost universally upon reward for good conduct. Such reward is recognized in the home, and is found indispensable in military training institutions and in camp and field life. It is given weighty consideration by criminal courts in imposing sentences and is the most effective measure for good order, uplift and reform known to penologists. Its disregard or restricted use by public school educators in the character training of youth is an obvious anomaly.

3. To place character upon the high pedestal of esteem by fluent words in public school assemblies, and then displace it by the apotheosis of scholarship in school practice is not only a technical error of training but an obvious moral failing. When deeds do not square with words the fatal lapse does not escape the notice of the young. Such school practice is intellectually false and ethically wrong.

4. Present school practice denies due recognition of character at the end of the training period. When promise of good citizenship and good parenthood are thus slighted at the very threshold of life's more serious work, exhortation to moral character will fail of response.

Upon what basis of reason, morals or expediency can our educators deny the highest reward to those who manifest the essential and indispensable qualities that we seek above all else to develop in our citizenship? If our public schools are mere incidental appurtenances to the home, responsible only for scholarship results, the present practice can be understood, even if not approved. But if the schools have become the comprehensive and dominant agency for building the citizenship of the Nation, such practice is subversive and indefensible.



## CHAPTER XII.

### BASIC VALUE OF MORAL CONDUCT ILLUSTRATED BY:

#### (a) *Military Training*

#### (b) *Religious Training*

IN the training of youth we are impelled to seek and confer, first of all, the things of vital and comprehensive import. Constraining circumstance enters largely as a factor in determining the field of adult effort, notwithstanding our attempts to make early choice; and however specialized may be the end sought in a particular field of training we can never hope to be free of the interdependence that relates us to the social body. Individual welfare is to be found only within the boundaries of the common welfare to which we make united contribution. There must always be in life the binding ties of common associative purpose if we would escape trouble, discord and conflict. We must harmonize the primary elements of our nature before we can hope to enjoy the fruits of reciprocal service that it is the purpose of special lines of training to render. The practice of the well known ancient virtues, commonly expressed as morality, is almost universally accepted as the solution of the problem presented.

Faith in this solution is the unchallenged inheritance from the past, and humanity ever gropes and stumbles without it. As illustrative of its wide applicability, brief review is offered of two special kinds of training significantly distinct from each other in character and purpose. In both military and religious training, problems of human conduct are presented similar to those we find in the general training of children, and their solution follows the lines hereinbefore indicated in reference thereto.

#### *Military Training:*

It is not well known in civil life that the highly specialized training necessary to efficiency in the profession of arms is based upon moral conduct. Military training is, first of all, moral training. Individual good character is the first requisite to group efficiency. The technical requirements are not determinative and their development usually presents little difficulty. Marksmanship, for example, is highly desirable, but good marksmen are not, of necessity, good soldiers. Courage is desirable, but the physical courage of a dare-devil may be a liability instead of an asset. A body composed of such men as these might be wholly inefficient; might disintegrate or mutiny before they encountered the enemy. A good soldier must be loyal, honest, truthful and reliable. He must have patience and self-control. He must perform, cheerfully, onerous and distasteful duties and render willing obedience to the rules and regulations of the command, knowing that their only purpose is the welfare of the entire comradeship.

Any fair inquiry into the methods of life and training in military camps and barracks, or on board ships of the navy, will reveal that such basic moral qualities constitute the primary aim and purpose of the administrative control. The conduct and effort manifested by the man in his technical drills are not distinct features carefully separated from his more personal life, but part and parcel of his life as a whole in which his general conduct becomes the exponent of his present and prospective worth.

Such inquiry would also expose the false conception, with its unfortunate consequences, that the response of the military body to these ideals and requirements is based upon fear of punishment and the compulsion of military authority. Does not everybody know that intelligent, free men cannot be controlled against their will by other men; and that they will not submit to arbitrary force exercised by any agent not amenable to a just accounting? Should not every intelligent person know that the exceptional cases in military life where punishments are executed and physical force invoked, are precisely analogous, as to purpose and necessity, to the cases in civil life disciplined in like manner by criminal courts? The inquiry would probably show to the credit of military life a smaller percentage of the irresponsible and bad element, a clearer line between the good and bad elements and a fairer measure of justice to all the individuals concerned.

When it is remembered that the rank and file of men who voluntarily enlist in military service are often less favored in their economic and domestic life than the average of their fellow-citizens, the inquiry is natural as to the process by which contentment, good order and efficiency are attained. Investigation would show that the forces used are not repellent but attractive. It would show that instead of fear, opportunity and hope are offered; that reliance is placed not on punishment but on reward; and that encouragement supplants threats and violence. Conduct in its broad significance, including effort and attitude toward duty, takes precedence of technical achievement. The man with good conduct record, regardless of his military rank or position, will have every privilege the conditions of service permit. He will be esteemed by his fellow-officers and men; will be considered with favor for advancement; will be given preference when other things are equal, and at the expiration of enlistment will be given an honorable discharge that is virtually a character diploma. It is a certificate of good conduct and a testimonial to his integrity, well recognized as a passport to employment. If he wishes to continue his service, he is given liberal leave of absence with full pay, and his rate of pay is automatically increased.

The comparative *conduct* of an individual in a group is, generally, a matter more obvious and more open to public knowledge than his comparative professional skill and efficiency. All men are manifesting conduct at all times. They are not always manifesting their technical skill, nor is it possible always

to provide opportunity for fair competition, each with each, to determine comparative efficiency in the diversity of military duties.

If the attempt were made to base rewards, advancements and privileges upon technical proficiency alone, the experiment would quickly result in jealousies, discontent, suspicion, charges of favoritism, and utter destruction of morale. The undisputable record of conduct faults, delinquencies and misdemeanors, that are likewise items of public knowledge, has been found by the crucial test of long experience to be the fairest basis upon which to make judgment of character, to stimulate men to good habits and self-control, and to build coöperative efficiency.

Such, in brief, are the effective means in military life by which men are induced to weigh their contemplated acts by the scales of right and wrong, to make moral self-decisions, to cultivate self-control and, through such self-discipline, to appreciate and realize the benefits of the golden rule in their lives. Children or adults who are undergoing such experience are in the high course of moral training.

In our National Academies for the training of military and naval officers *conduct* is a foundation course. Notwithstanding the fact that the function of these institutions is to develop a highly specialized product, the choicest technical specimen will be summarily rejected if conduct falls below the assigned standard. The importance attached to this subject by all officers of experience is reflected in the administration of these schools, and knowledge of this on the part of the students, together with the democratic publicity of the conduct record, contributes a powerful steadying effect upon the life and character of the graduates.

An officer's commission reads that it is conferred because of trust in his "patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities." Thus three worthy elements of character precede technical equipment in this outline of qualifications.

### *Religious Training:*

Excuse for venturing comment upon the profound subject of religious training may be found in the recent efforts to give more of such training to children either in the schools or by week-day church instruction. It has become a familiar topic of discussion in public prints and in educational and religious circles. It is not, however, with these propositions that we are here directly concerned. Our purpose relates to the nature, aims and processes of religious training as a special line of educational endeavor. Without attempting formal definition we will briefly consider this kind of training in the light of the words by which it is designated and the principles that apply to training in general.

What, then, is the instruction that we should give to our children, and what is the conduct response they should manifest to satisfy our conception of Religious Training? The Bible, embracing the Old and New Testaments,

is the recognized basic authority for our religious guidance. From its teachings we learn of two fundamental relationships that condition our lives and charge us with inescapable responsibilities. The teachings of this religion relate us on the one side to God, by direct communion between Him and the individual soul; and as a consequence of this, on the other side we are related to each other in a universal brotherhood. These two relationships involve solemn duties, in the discharge of which humanity finds its highest satisfaction and rewards, and the divine purpose is realized. Thus the aim of religious training is to develop knowledge of these relationships and to perfect ourselves in the acquittal of the duties we owe, respectively, to God and to man. These two classes of duties, clearly distinguishable in the Mosaic law and unequivocally stated in the New Testament, should be made known to our children.

The sources and means of direct instruction are the Bible and other religious writings, Sunday Schools and other church agencies, parents, teachers, etc. From these sources we learn that the chief duties we owe to God are to worship Him and to do His will. Present day instruction of children in the duties we owe to God is, concededly, limited and weak. Multitudes receive no direct instruction whatever, and their knowledge is derived only from the chance and imperfect ideas that come from the promiscuous associations and experiences of life.

We do not forget, however, that the word "training" carries the compound content of instruction and drill. Instruction alone is insufficient. There must be the actual expressive deed. Such conduct response to our instructions relative to the worship of God is to be looked for in prayer, praise, religious meditation, public worship, private devotions and the like. If this response, or religious drill, is weak or lacking, then religious training in our duties to God becomes a tragic failure. Without such drill the instruction does not come to fruition.

Considering next the division of religious training that concerns the duties we owe to each other, we may say briefly that the sources and means of instruction are primarily the same as those already stated. Next to our duties to God, and indissolubly linked with them, the Bible emphasizes, and specifies in profuse detail, our duties to each other.

Strict conformity of human conduct to the generally accepted interpretation of these teachings would disclose no inconsistency between them and the conduct reflective of the moral codes of western civilization. Whatever may be the source of our moral code, its fulfillment does not conflict with the inspired Word. All the requirements of recognized ethical conduct are included in the stricter demands of Christian teaching.

Knowledge of the duties we owe to each other is also derived through the contacts of our daily pursuits and activities. These matters are often the immediate concern of the public and are adjusted by our civil institutions.



Through such secular agencies, including statutory laws, knowledge of these duties is readily accessible and no attempt at itemization is necessary. Their authority and validity are to be found in the original sources we have considered.

It is plain from the foregoing that there can be but little, if any, difference between the *practice* of our duties to each other as derived from religious teachings, and the *practice* of the recognized moral precepts transmitted to us by the tides of time and human experience. Is it not true that the demands of religion, touching our human relationships, and the demands of our moral code, are wholly consistent and practically equivalent to each other? Is morality anything other than deep-seated, perhaps subconscious, religious conviction finding its expression in our human associations?

If the affirmative answer to these questions is not disputed, then the conduct response of this phase of religious training is practically equivalent to the conduct response of moral training. As relates to the human plane, *the drill in doing is the same for both.*

The moral element is thus shown to be the common basic feature of training for superlative excellence in the antithetic fields of human strife, and human good will and brotherhood. Such fact alone would suggest its application as basic to the best results in the entire range of training—a conclusion in accord with the belief of the wisest students and interpreters of history.

With reference to the demands now made for increased religious instruction to our children, whether through the medium of the public school or otherwise, it may be said with confidence that unless instruction is supplemented by the reality of act and deed, the results will be disappointing and in utter disproportion to the time and effort consumed. Worthy and necessary as such instruction may be in itself, it is volatile until fixed by actual responsive compliance. The weak results of the religious instruction now given are readily accounted for by the lack of such response. Instruction in the truth, and perception of it, are far in advance of its practice. Again we are reminded of the parable whose significant utterance warns us of the peril we invite in hearing the word and neglecting the deed.





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